

— and this is our heritage

GENEALOGY COLLECTION

I

WALTER EVANS, and several brothers, came from Wales to America.

II

His son, GEORGE EVANS (whose wife's name was Mary), died in Halifax County, Virginia, in 1788; and left children: Edward, William, George, John, Walter, James, Elizabeth (Carlin), Sarah and Mary.

III

GEORGE EVANS, born about 1760 in Virginia (his wife's name was Sarah). His children were: Jesse, Nathan, Elijah, George, (Walter, ^{MARRIED} Susanna Atkinson) Mary Conway (Aunt Mary), Roda Latham, Louisa Walker, and Eliza Nelson (Aunt Eliza).

IV

ELIJAH EVANS, born 1786 in Virginia. Married Ruth Holt in 1804. Their children were: Hamilton, Henry Clinton, Matilda, Maria Biddle, James Harvey, Sarah Easley, Laura Kirkpatrick, Lucy Jane Epps, Lafayette and William.

V

MARIA EVANS BIDDLE, born 1814. Married B. R. Biddle in 1834. Her children were: James Henry, b. 1837; Robert Evans, b. 1838; Ellinorah Ruth, b. 1840; Sarah Emma, b. 1842; Matilda (called Puggie), b. 1846; Edwin Webber, b. 1849; Arthur Platte, b. 1852; Alice Eudora, b. 1854.

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To Helen Brewster, hoping
that you will enjoy this
story of my grandparents.

Esther M. Lueders

April 11, 1945.

— and this is our heritage

E.M. Leithold

WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA
1944

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ESTHER MORELAND LEITHOLD

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Foreword

MUCH OF MY CHILDHOOD was spent with my grandparents: and the stories they told me of their childhood, and of the customs of the people among whom they lived, were so vivid, they have made me feel that I too have been privileged to live (through them) in the America they knew so well and loved so much.

It was my desire to introduce these wonderful people, and their home-land, to my descendants, that prompted me to write this true, though inadequate, story of my grandparents, Robert and Maria Biddle: and I dedicate this book to my children, my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren.

ESTHER MORELAND LEITHOLD
May, 1944.



ESTHER MORELAND LEITHOLD



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CHAPTER I

Dr. Preston Holt and Elijah Evans sat at a table, near the open fire in the large dining room at Evans' Inn, while they ate their breakfast and discussed the latest news. Elijah was a short, rosy-cheeked man between twenty-five and thirty years of age. His lips smiled, and his blue eyes seemed to twinkle as he talked. His fair hair waved back from his forehead, and was tied with a narrow black ribbon at the nape of his neck. He was looking over a newspaper and talking to his brother-in-law, at the same time; and was saying:

"Well Preston, I sure air glad you came. Ruth's always been well; but I kain't help feelin' a bit anxious; and was mighty glad to see you come aridin' up to the door last night. Paw and Maw were glad too. We all feel a heap better, knowin' we have a good doctor right here in the house, if we need him. A couple of travelers staid here last night, and loaned me this here newspaper to read 'til they're ready to leave this mornin'. I reckon them English mean to devil us all they can. Some men went through here yesterday, on their way south to join up with Andy Jackson's Volunteers; and they said the British were agivin' the Indians five dollars for every settler's scalp they brought in. That's the reason the Indians killed all those folks, in the Southern Territories last year. If it wa'n't for Ruth and the children I'd go down the river and join up with Jackson's Troops, right now; so's to get a whack at them from New Orleans. Every body figures they'll go there next, and try to close the Mississippi to our boats. This here paper tells all about them English rascals atryin' to burn all our fine Government buildin's at Washington. It says they even burned our records;—and everything else they could lay their hands on. It says: 'Mrs. Madison, the President's wife, risked her life to save that fine picture of George Washington, and the 'rigional Declaration of Independence Jefferson wrote.' I tell you our women are mighty fine! And it says here: 'Mrs. Madison deserves the thanks of all of the American people, for savin' those priceless emblems of our freedom.' We whipped them English once and we can do it again! It'll take time, but this war won't take near as long as the war for our Independence did. It tells, in this paper, about the British goin' up Chesapeake Bay, to Baltimore, after they'd set fire to Washington. The men in Baltimore were ready for 'em; and they had to skedaddle when their Commander was killed. It says here, they lost most of their best men in the battle. It served 'em right. I'm glad I had a chance to read this here paper. The men who loaned it to me are the first who've been through here, for a long time, with news from the Eastern States."

Just then the travelers entered the room and ordered their breakfast. They wished to continue their journey as soon as possible: for they hoped to travel thirty miles before sundown;—and as the days were getting short, they had no time to lose.

Evans' Inn was not as large as the public house at Bean's Station, on the other side of the mountain; but it was considered one of the

best stopping places west of the Blue Ridge Mountains; and travelers tried to get there to stay over night, and eat their excellent meals, as they journeyed through north-eastern Tennessee. The Inn was built on the south bank of the Clinch River, and on the east side of the main Kentucky road, where the river had to be crossed on Evans' new Toll Bridge.

Back from the road, a few yards from the main buildings, the kitchen, the smoke-house, the store-house, the loom-house and other women's work shops, stood in front of the cabins for the household servants. On the other side of the road was the comfortable log house where Elijah, and his family lived. A building used for a flour and grist mill (and also a saw mill) was built on the lower side of Indian Creek, at the dam, so that the great water-wheel could generate power for all purposes. Across the river were more Negro cabins, a blacksmith shop, stock-barns and stables. The Inn, itself, had been built of fine, straight white-oak logs; and the rooms were paneled, on the inside, with planed boards of native wood.

Elijah went over to the table to see if his guests had been amply served, and to tell them how glad he was to have had the opportunity of reading the late war news. They asked him to sit down, by them, while they finished their meal: for they had much to tell him, and many questions to ask about the roads and the best places to stop, on their way north and west. Elijah answered all of their questions, described in detail the roads they wished to travel, directed them to the best wayside inns, and listened eagerly to their accounts of the country through which they had passed, on their way towards the west. They spoke, in glowing terms of Evans' comfortable Inn, and of the fine new bridge that had been built across the Clinch River during the past year; and complimented him for owning such a fine piece of property.

Elijah was one of those honest souls who never wanted to deceive any one, so he said: 'But the place aint really mine. It belongs to my father, George Evans, who bought the first three hundred acres at a sheriff's sale nigh onto ten years, or so, ago;—and then a few months later, he had a chance to get three-hundred acres more, includin' old Chuck's Ferry which crossed the river here. It was a mighty fine property, and Paw always liked to be where people gathered to whittle and talk politics;—and where travelers stopped and brought news from other parts of the world. The idee of livin' here seemed right nice; so he started in to improve the property.

"We was livin' on a farm in Jefferson County when he bought this here place; and my older brothers was already married and settled, on their own land, on the other side of the mountain; so I was the only one who could help him over here. I didn't much want to come either 'cause of a little girl that'ad lived near us ever since I could recollect was just gettin' grown up; and I didn't want to go across the mountain, into another County, and leave her behind. I was only eighteen and Ruth Holt was only thirteen; but our folks let us get married so as we'd be satisfied. Seems now, like we was just children

when we came here to live with Maw and Paw. We've always liked it here, and we helped to build up the place. Now we wouldn't want to live any where else. There's your man, at the door, with your horses."

Elijah followed the travelers out to the porch, and as he shook each man by the hand, he said: "I'm mighty glad you all staid over with us last night, and I hope you'll stop on your way back." As he watched them mount their horses and start away, he waved his hand in a friendly farewell, and then went around to the kitchen to order breakfast for Ruth and the children. Ruth usually had their breakfast prepared at home; but she, and Elijah and the two boys, had their other meals with father and mother Evans, at the Inn. However, this morning, she was busy getting the boys ready to visit their Uncle Walter, and Aunt Susanna, at Tazewell: so they were having their breakfast brought over from the Inn, in covered pewter dishes.

After they had had their breakfast, old black George rode up to the door, on the safest horse from the stables; and the boys laughed and shouted with delight at the idea of going away for a real visit. It was the 28th of November, in the year 1814. There had been frost, during the night, and the air was chilly; but the little red noses of the children were the only indications that they might feel the cold. They wore red knitted caps and mittens, and brown home-spun clothes, with a hand woven plaid shawl pinned tightly under each little chin. Hamilton, the older boy, felt very important; for he was to ride on the pillion behind the old slave. Henry, who was four, was just as excited as his brother; but was a little fearful too, for it was the first time he had been away from his mother, for more than a few hours; and there were tears, as well as laughter, in his eyes, as he was lifted up to old black George and placed on the little seat on the front of the saddle, where the old negro held him safely in place, while he took the bridle-rein in his free hand, and started the old horse down the road toward the bridge.

Matilda wanted to go too, for she always wanted to do everything the boys did: but her father lifted her onto the wheel-barrow, and told her that she could ride down to the mill and watch Andy grind the corn into grits for her supper;—and, then she could go to the Inn and stay with her grandfather Evans for the rest of the day.

When the children were all gone, Ruth and Grandmother Evans went into the house and closed the door.

CHAPTER II

The next morning George Evans, his son Elijah, and Preston Holt were sitting at the table, eating a breakfast of broiled ham, hominy and corn pones, when Sarah Evans came in leading her little granddaughter, Matilda, by the hand. As they sat down to the table, Elijah leaned over toward his daughter and said: "Tillie, did Grandmaw tell you, Uncle Preston found a nice little baby girl, for your maw, early this mornin' so's you can have a little sister to play with?" Matilda looked at her father, and then at Uncle Preston, while her eyes widened and filled with tears, as she said: "Till no want lille sister. Till's Paw's lille girl." Elijah smiled and said: "Tillie you'll always be Paw's little girl; but now you'll be his biggest little girl. It's nice to have two little girls. After 'while the boys will grow to be big boys; and they won't want a girl trapesin' 'round after 'em; so it'll be nice to have a little sister to play with. Baby sister is such a little tyke,—so teeny and soft and warm,—she aint much bigger than a doll. When you're through with your mush we'll go over to see her."

Sarah Evans said: "Elijah, I think the baby looks like your sister Mary. Her real name is Maria;—and it's such a good old family name! Wouldn't it be kind'r nice to name the baby for her?") George Evans added his voice to the suggestion by saying: "It's always been a sorrow to Mary to have no little ones of her own; and I know she'd like to have the baby named for her." Elijah, too, liked the name; but thought that they should consult Ruth, as she might have some other name in mind.

At thirteen Ruth had been a lovely child, with blue eyes and light brown hair, that showed a tinge of gold in the sunlight; and when she had laughed she had displayed two rows of perfect teeth. When she married she covered her pretty hair with a cap, and tried to conduct herself with dignity, as a married woman should. Later, when the children came, she assumed the duties and cares of motherhood as naturally and successfully as a woman twice her age might have done. She was now twenty-three years of age, had been married ten years, and had four children; so it was natural that her beauty should begin to fade. She had lost two of her teeth; and some of the color had faded from her cheeks: but she still looked beautiful to Elijah, as he and Tillie entered her room with his mother.

As they neared the bed, she uncovered the sleeping infant, for them to see, and said: "I've been a layin' here, lookin' at the baby. Seems like she looks like Mary Conway. 'Twould be nice to name the baby for her." So the matter was settled and the little girl was called Maria. A letter was sent to Mary Conway, at Chucky, telling her that she had a little namesake at Evans' Toll Bridge.

Mary Conway, who's husband was a man of wealth and importance, was delighted to hear that her brother Elijah's little daughter had been named for her; but the roads were rough, and the grade, over Clinch Mountain was steep and narrow; so, during the winter

months, when ice and snow and drenching rains made the roads all but impassable, few travelers attempted to cross the mountain: so Mary Conway did not see her little namesake until the following summer. However she did send an order, to the silversmith, at Knoxville, for a silver cup for her namesake; which her father (George Evans) was to call for. As he rode down to the Capital, on horse back, several times a year. It eventually reached Evans' Toll Bridge in April, just in time for Maria to use, as she was being taught to drink from a cup.

It was not until June, when Mr. Conway had to make a business trip to Knoxville, that Mary persuaded her husband to take her to visit the families of her father and brother. Maria was then almost seven months old, and the pride of the household. Her curly yellow hair, blue eyes and rosy cheeks, made her a beautiful child. The other children were handsome and sturdy too; but Maria had a mischievous twinkle in her eyes, and a smile that attracted every one to her.

When Mary Conway first saw her, and held out her hands to the baby, Little Maria smiled back at her and raised her arms towards her aunt, as though she had always known her and wanted to be taken up. From that moment there seemed to be a bond of sympathy between her and her Aunt Mary,—whose natural mother love poured out and enveloped her little namesake who suddenly seemed to fill the place of the children who had been denied her for so long. As she held the child to her breast, she pled with her sister-in-law to let her keep the baby;—at least for part of the time.

Maria was much too young to be taken away from her mother; but Ruth promised Mary that she could take the child home with her, for awhile after she had been weaned and could eat regular food: but that time came much sooner than any of them had expected.

Ruth was not feeling well at the time of Mary Conway's visit; but she had managed to keep up and extend true southern hospitality, while Mary and her husband were there. As soon as they were gone, she grew rapidly worse and could not leave her bed for some time. In fact it was several weeks before she was able to be up and eat her meals as usual. In the mean time Maria had to be weaned; and was soon able to sit up in her chair, at the table, while Mammy Liza fed her with a spoon.

Maria was a small child and had the appearance of being delicate because her skin was so white: but she was really very strong, and had learned to walk before she was ten months old: so, when Aunt Mary came again, in November, Ruth was persuaded to let her take the child home with her, for the winter. That was the first of many visits the little girl paid her aunt: and, for the next nineteen years, she spent some time, each year, at Chucky or Knoxville with her beloved Aunt Mary, who humored and petted her, and gave her lovely clothes, just as though she were her own and only child.

In February, 1816, her brother Nathan was born; and other brothers and sisters continued to arrive, at intervals of about two years, until there were twelve children (six boys and six girls) in the family of Elijah and Ruth Evans. In the order of their birth they

were:—Hamilton, Henry Clinton, Matilda, Maria, Nathan, James Harvey, Sarah H., Laura (or Louisa), Lucy Jane, Lafayette, Amanda and William.

Hamilton (called Ham), was a married man, twenty-two years of age, and his father's partner, at the Inn, when William, the youngest child, was born: but the great difference in their ages did not prevent them from being companionable; and they were a strangely congenial and happy family.

There was another Elijah Evans (a cousin) who had a family in another part of Granger County; but the mountains were between them, and the roads were so poor they seldom met.

CHAPTER III

The Evans children had always lived at, or near, the Inn; so they were accustomed to meeting people and were not self-conscious in the presence of strangers. This environment, and the example of their parents and grandparents, had developed, in them, a modest self-assurance that was unusual among children of pioneer families. They were good looking, with a delicate blond type of beauty that was very appealing:—and which belied their really strong constitutions and robust health. As hosts at the Inn they were taught, from early childhood, to be courteous and considerate of every one, regardless of his station in life. But back of their democratic behavior were aristocratic traditions that were founded on family pride.

The ancestors of the Evans family came to America, from Wales, more than half a century before the Revolution: and they told their children that there was no better blood in America than theirs. For the Evanses had always been God-fearing, clean-living people who had never married foreigners (meaning people from the mainland of Europe, or their American descendants),—nor others from whom they might inherit Scrofula or Consumption. These terms were rather loosely used, at that time, for Scrofula might mean any skin disease; and Consumption referred to chronic tuberculosis, of the type that affected whole families of the poorly housed and ill fed people of pioneer stock. This disease was supposed to be hereditary and carried a certain stigma with it; for it was largely due to the shiftlessness, poverty and ignorance of the families affected. However it was sometimes found in families of the best type: and it was then called "Quick Consumption,"—which was an entirely different kind of affliction, according to the people of that generation, and was not hereditary. Quick consumption (also called Galloping Consumption) carried away many of the young people of both sexes just as they were reaching maturity. The disease might have been tuberculosis of the lungs, or any other ailment that was accompanied by a cough or hemorrhage from the lungs or throat, and it was considered incurable. It was sad, indeed, and rather romantic, when a young person (especially a girl) became so affected. When her condition indicated that she might be "going into a decline" her friends went often to see her, taking dainties for her meals and the latest gossip for her entertainment, while they watched her gradually fade and die.

There had been a few cases of quick consumption in the Evans family,—even though they prided themselves on never having risked marriage with families that might transmit the disease, and of keeping their blood free of all hereditary taint.

They were also proud of the fact that they belonged to the cultured class; for they were well-to-do and better educated than most of the people about them. Their grandfather, one of the wealthiest men of Northeastern Tennessee, was registered as "George Evans, Gentleman" and was spoken of as "Squire Evans." He had been one

of the first magistrates of Jefferson County when Tennessee was made a State in 1796: at which time some of his brothers, and brothers-in-law, took leading parts in the development of that western frontier.

Only a short time after the close of the Revolutionary War George Evans, and his brothers and sisters, each took an equal part of the Virginia currency that had been kept in the chest their father had given them before his death, in Halifax County, Virginia, in 1788. With it they bought some of the best land in western North Carolina, that had been recently opened up for settlement. Being educated people, they took their places as leaders in the new communities.

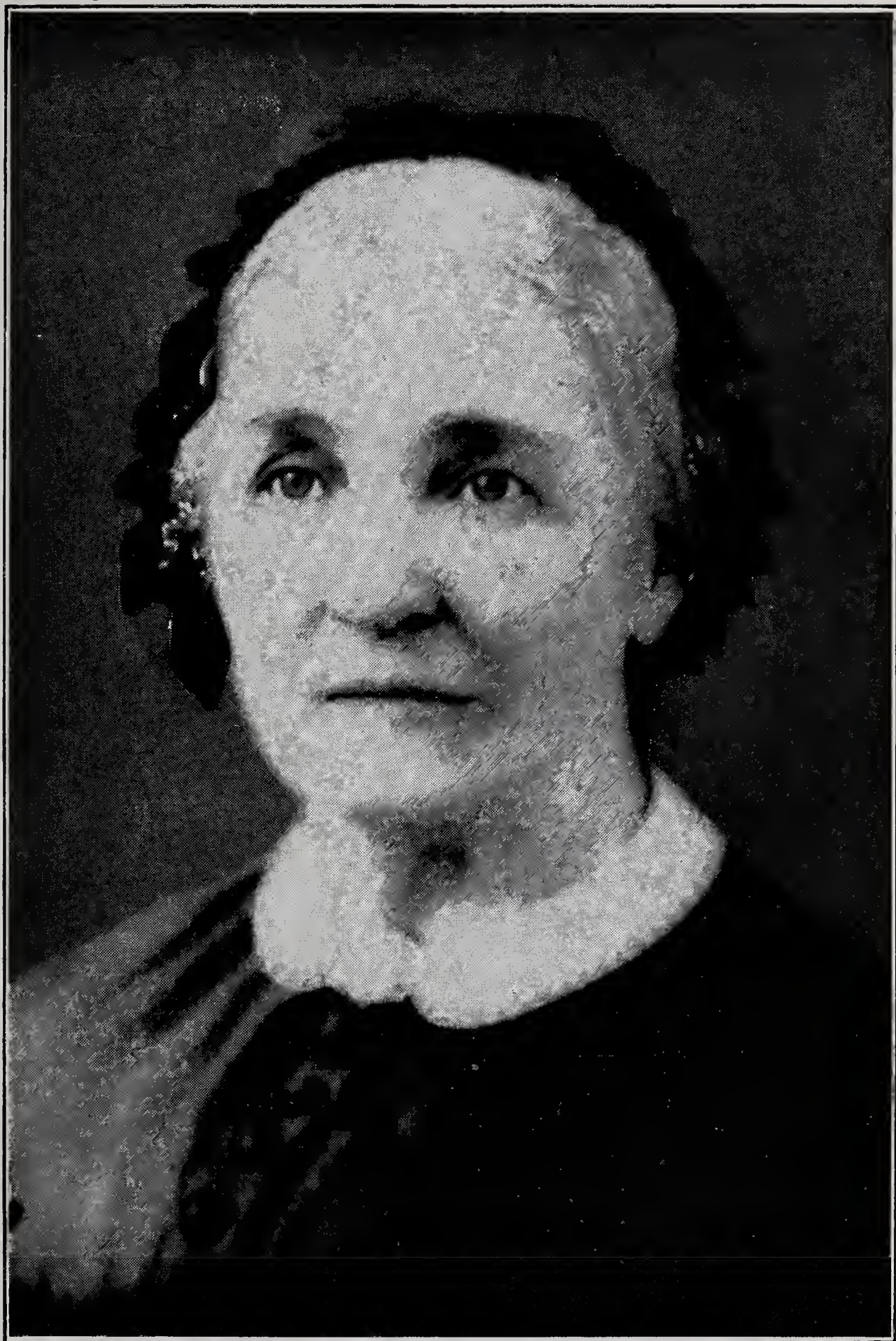
William Evans had been a Lieutenant in the Revolution, and was one of the first school teachers in that section, west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, which was later Eastern Tennessee.

Walter Evans taught school at Big Springs,—the first school in Granger County. He was later Clerk of Claiborne County, and a lawyer of ability. In fact the family of Elijah and Ruth Evans were people that any one would be proud to claim as kin: so they were a proud, self satisfied clan. They were happy people too, for no one of them was without a sense of humor,—and always ready to laugh at a joke, even though it was on them.

As the children grew older, the Inn became known as a place where not only good beds and good food could be had for a price, but where travelers received a hospitable welcome, and where (if he had the proper introduction) he might meet a group of charming young people, and join in their merriment. "Evans' Hospitality" became a by-word in Granger and Claiborne Counties; and friends often gathered at the Inn, where the men talked politics, the women knitted or sewed, and the young people danced, or played games in the large dining room at the right of the central hall.

The Evanses, like most early American pioneers, knew of the simple herbs that the Indians gathered, for curing their sick,—and how to use them. These they gathered and dried so they were always well supplied with household remedies. But there were also several doctors in the family, who were called when any of them were threatened with serious illness: and there could be no more devoted nurses than their colored servants who cared for them untiringly in sickness as well as in health. But skill and care were sometimes powerless in the fight against disease; and death came twice to the little family. A brother and a sister were taken across the river to the family burial ground on the hill, at the right of the Main Kentucky Road.

Although Indian Creek had been so named because of the Indian Village that had once stood on its banks, that section had long been safe for the white people who lived there. For many years the road had followed Indian Creek from Clinck Mountain to the ferry, where the bridge was then built. Most of the Indians had gone further south to the land that had been set aside for them by the Government: and the few who had remained were friends of the whites. There was one family, with several boys, who lived on the Evans' land, and worked for Elijah when he needed help with his stock. These Indian



MARIA EVANS BIDDLE
About 1860

boys were very fond of the Evans' children, and would have protected them with their lives, if necessary: so the family always knew that the children were safe, in the near-by woods, when they went, with the Indian boys, to gather nuts or berries.

The smoke house and the store house were two very interesting places to visit with Elijah when he went, with his keys each morning, to open the doors while the servants carried out food for the day's use. They were always filled with large quantities of food; for there had to be enough to last the family from one season until the next;—to provide for the travelers who would be served at the Inn,—and for the large number of slaves living on the place. In order to secure that amount of food it was necessary for members of the family, as well as the servants, to be almost constantly employed.

In the spring and summer wild strawberries were gathered for pies and preserves. The wild grapes were delicious too, when they were ripe. Some were dried for plum puddings or fruit cake; but most of them were made into jelly or wine. There were plums and apples and crabapples to gather; so that the great crocks could be filled with plum and apple butter, or crabapple spiced sweet pickles. Hundreds of pounds of apples were cut and dried for future use, while the peelings and cores were carefully saved for making jelly and vinegar. During the "apple season" fresh cider was frequently made; and any of it that was not used, while it was fresh, was distilled and made into brandy. Green beans were cut and strung for drying: sweet corn was cut from the cob and dried in the sun: peas and beans were shelled and dried; and all were put in cotton bags, that were securely tied and hung to the rafters of the storehouse. Crocks of pickles and barrels of sauerkraut were packed along the wall; while winter apples, potatoes, yams, squash, and other late vegetables, were kept several months by being packed in straw, in that wonderful storehouse.

Each Fall, after the first heavy frost, the slaves started butchering the hogs. And then came one of the busiest times of the whole year, when every one had to work at full speed in order to save the pork before a possible change in the weather,—when some of it might spoil. Everything had to be spotlessly clean;—and there must be no waste. There were hams and shoulders,—and sides for bacon that must be prepared for curing. The spare-ribs and backbones were better eaten fresh; but, if the weather turned warm, they had to be put in brine. A large quantity of meat went into the chopping bowls, to be slowly chopped by hand and then seasoned and made into sausage. Most of the sausage was patted into cakes and cooked, before it could be put into crocks and covered with fresh lard,—to be used, as it was needed, in the future. There was liverworst and head-cheese,—and sausages stuffed into cases for smoking. Pickled pig's feet, salt pork and many buckets of lard had to be stored away. Only the best of the fat was cut, in small pieces, and rendered into lard. The small pieces of browned fat, left in the kettle, after the lard was poured off, were called "cracklins"; and were considered quite a delicacy when

they were used as shortening in corn bread or biscuits,—commonly called Cracklin' Bread.

The fat that was not suitable for fine, white lard, was kept for making soap. The lye necessary for soap was made, at home, from wood ashes: and the soap itself was boiled in a great iron kettle that hung from a home made tripod, over an outdoor fire.

The Evanses ground their flour, corn meal, grits and hominy in their own mill; and raised plenty of white corn, of superior quality, to grind for the family and the guests at the Inn: while yellow field corn was used for the stock, and made into meal, grits and hominy for the negro slaves. They raised their own chickens, geese, ducks and turkeys; and, by careful planning, had eggs for the table almost every day of the year.

They had several hives of bees; and the slaves also brought in large quantities of wild honey from the woods. A number of sugar trees grew near by; and it was great fun, for young and old, to go out with the men in early spring, to gather the sap and boil it down for maple syrup or sugar. They also made many gallons of sorgum molasses, each year, for the slaves,—and others who cared for it.

There were wild nuts, in the Tennessee hills, to be gathered. Black walnuts, hickorynuts, chestnuts and chinquepins were plentiful: but it took time to gather them and shell them for use. The Indians considered acorns, from the white oak, a great delicacy; and the children sometimes gathered them and baked them in the ashes of the great fireplace. That fire was never allowed to go out, day or night, during the whole year; for matches had not yet come into use, and there must always be live coals ready for starting new fires. The children made long paper tapers (sometimes called spills or candle-lighters) that were kept in containers at the sides of the fireplace. They would start burning easily, when touched by live coals, and were used for lighting candles, or other fires. The candles too were made at home from a mixture of mutton tallow, beef suet and bee's wax, which was heated and poured into metal candle-molds to cool. It was quite a task for Ruth and the girls to make enough candles to supply their home and the Inn.

At night the sitting room was lighted by a big fire in the huge fireplace at one end of the room, and by candles placed on tables, for the convenience of those who had sewing or other hand work to do.

After the younger children had been put to bed, the boys (who's business it was to keep plenty of nuts cracked and shelled) would sit on the benches at each side of the fireplace,—each with a flat-iron between his knees and a busy hammer in his right hand, cracking the nuts, as he held them, one at a time, on the iron. When a large pan had been filled they began picking out the kernels and putting them in crocks, while the shells were tossed into the fire as they worked. Sometimes, when corn was needed, the boys would shell corn, as they sat by the evening fire. The younger girls sewed carpet rags, while Matilda and Maria worked at their quilt pieces or knitted socks or mittens under their mother's supervision. Ruth and Mother Evans

always had mending, or spinning, for their candle light work: and Elijah, or his father, would frequently leave the Inn and come over to join the family group, and lead them in singing their favorite songs. Grandfather Evans had a violin on which he played the familiar airs, and Elijah's strong tenor voice led the others, as they joined in the singing,—while their hands were busy with some useful work.

Grandfather Evans taught them the old Welch folk songs that he had learned from his grandfather,—who had come to America more than a hundred years before. The family always enjoyed singing together: and they especially enjoyed singing the old, familiar church hymns before their evening prayers. Many of the songs of the day consisted of numerous verses which told a story of unrequited love, moral tragedy or death. The narratives were sung as solos by different members of the family, while all joined in the choruses. As the children grew older the boys learned comic songs that were received with great enthusiasm. Occasionally traveling groups of singers would stop over night at the Inn; and the children learned new songs from them.

Even more entertaining than their singing were the evenings they could persuade their parents or grandparents to tell them stories of pioneer life on the "Western Frontier";—which had been south western Virginia and the north-western part of North Carolina (then Tennessee). When the family first came to Tennessee the country was filled with wild animals and hostile Indians; but that seemed like long ago; for, while animals were still found in the hills, the hostile Indians were only a tradition to the young people.

One night, when they begged Grandmother Evans to tell them a story about the Indians, she said: "I'll tell you a story about the Indians, and how all of my brothers happened to fight in the war for Independence. You see, my mother, who'd been sickly for a long time, died in 1773; and the next year my father married my Aunt Elizabeth, who'd been livin' with us. Then he and Aunt Elizabeth and four of my brothers, and sister Elizabeth and her husband, went to South Carolina where they got some fine land along the Tyger River, and built them a home. All his life my father'd been movin' from one place to another, a 'lookin' for better land. That time he thought he'd found the Promised Land, sure 'nough: and he wrote to his brother in Virginia tellin' him 'twas the finest place he'd ever seen. There was Indians 'round there but they was friendly 'till some of the English soldiers went down there and got them all riled up. I staid with my sister in North Carolina, but her boy, John, went down to visit with his grandfather. The second year they were there they started to have trouble with the Indians: so three of my brothers went down to the Indian village to palaver with them and see if they wouldn't be more friendly. While my big brothers were all gone the Indians came to the house and killed my father and Aunt Elizabeth, my brother Preston, my sister Elizabeth's little boy Preston, and my other sister's boy John. Sister Elizabeth, and her husband were visiting at a neighbors; and when they started home they thought they could see a cloud of dust and smoke over near father's house. As they got

nearer they could hear a noise, like Indians whoopin' and yellin', over in that direction; but by the time they got to the clearin' the noise had stopped and the Indians had gone; but the air was filled with smoke and feathers. After the Indians had killed all the folks they had taken their knives and cut all the ticks of the feather beds and pillows, before they set fire to the house. I wasn't there but it was one of the worst things I ever heard tell about. Every one blamed the English, for them Indians had been friendly 'til the English gave them guns and told them stories about the settlers to make them hate them and stir up trouble. After that my brothers got men together, to form companies of soldiers to fight the Indians,—and the English too, who were back of all their devilment. The men and the older boys of the Evans family, as well as our men in Virginia, were ready to join them. Your grandpaw went with them as soon as your Uncle Walter was old enough to do his chores at home."

Sometimes, when the winter nights were cold, and the moonlight shown through the window, Grandmother would say: "On nights like this I can almost hear the yelping of the wolf packs in Pittsylvania County, when I was a girl. They would kill our sheep and goats; and a big pack would even jump a horse or cow, when they was hungry. When we'd hear them we'd see that the doors were all latched and move close to our mother,—or go to bed and cover our heads with the quilts. The county paid a bounty for wolves heads, and the hides were as good as tobacco or money at the store; so wolf traps were set all over the county; and some men made a living catching and killing wolves,—until now they are nearly all gone."

There were still some wild animals that preyed on the domestic animals at Evans' Bridge: and the slaves became expert trappers; for they were allowed to keep the pelts of the animals they caught.

(NOTE: According to the family tradition Grandmother (Sarah) Evans was Sarah Hampton, a sister of General Wade Hampton, but I have found no documentary evidence to prove it.)

CHAPTER IV

It was quite a problem to educate a family in north-eastern Tennessee in the early part of the nineteenth century: for there were very few rural schools, and free schools were supported for the poor only. Any self-respecting man would have considered it a disgrace to have accepted any kind of support from the taxpayers. It was only the shiftless, and mentally and physically unfit who received aid from the County or State; and even those unfortunates were cared for by relatives whenever it was possible. To have accepted an education, or any other free service from the taxpayers, would have been to lose cast among the people of the community; for it would have been equal to an admission of being a personal failure. As far as their social standing was concerned, it would have been better to have had no education whatever: for many of the most prominent pioneer families had no "book larnin" at all. They had independence and pride, and good judgment and common sense. The older generation had lived such strenuous and dangerous lives, there had been little time or opportunity for education, except that which they got from the practical school of life; where the ability to speak some of the Indian dialects was more important than the ability to write one's name. The most necessary thing for them to learn was to cope with the wilderness and the dangers around them; so many thought that learning from books was a waste of time. It was generally considered quite unnecessary and even undesirable for girls to be taught anything beyond the arts of housekeeping and homemaking.

The Evanses, however, considered a cultivated mind one of the essentials of the true American lady or gentleman: and they were fortunate to have, in their home, an old friend of their grandfather's, who had prepared himself to teach, in Virginia, before the Revolution. He had lost one leg during the war, and had lived with the Evanses for many years. If he was related at all, it was very distantly; but the children called him Uncle Uriah; and Elijah's family was the second generation of Evanses he had taught.

The boys and girls learned their lessons from the same books, and were given the same instruction, regardless of sex. They only spent a few hours each day at classes; but, as their teacher lived with them in their home, he gave them much valuable instruction outside of regular school hours.

Their religious life was considered as important as their schooling. In fact it was more important; for it was a preparation for eternity, while this life, at best, was a short one. They were members of the Methodist Church; but they were not as strict, in their conduct, as many of the older members thought they should be. However their religion was very genuine and they all had a deep-rooted feeling of moral responsibility concerning the problems of every day life: but they also believed in fun and gayety and harmless pleasures.

The older boys, Hamilton and Henry, were allowed to help about the Inn: but, from childhood, the girls were taught to cook and to supervise the preparation of food for present and future use. They were also taught to spin and weave and sew. The family raised their own sheep for wool, while cotton and flax was grown on their land; so that their carpets and blankets, sheets and clothes, were all made at home. As the girls grew older, and wanted finer materials for their best clothes, they bought them at Knoxville when they made their yearly visit at their Uncle's home in the city. Although Knoxville was no longer the State Capitol, it was the center of learning and fashion for Eastern Tennessee.

Aunt Mary, who had many colored servants, always spent much of her time weaving fine fabrics; so when Maria visited her, she taught her to spin and weave fine linen, and also to embroider and sew with such fine and perfect stitches, she became known as the best "needle-woman" in the neighborhood, while she was still a child. And because she could weave and sew better than any one else in the family, it became her duty to weave the fine white linen for her brother's shirts, and to sit hour after hour, in her little stiff backed chair, hemming the ruffles, for their shirt fronts, so carefully the tiny stitches could not be seen by the average eye. She took pride in her work; for every one praised her for the beautiful sewing she could do; and they failed to realize that she was still a child, and would have been better off playing out of doors, with her brothers and sisters, than straining her eyes and nerves day after day in an effort to turn out such perfect needle work.

Uncle Uriah taught all of the children their history lessons at the same time, but he gave the older children additional reading to do by themselves. He often taught them by reading aloud and then the following day questioned them about the previous lesson. Sometimes he would tell them true stories of his own and their ancestors' past; like the following: "You know, before the first war with England, I lived in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, near your grandpaw's family; and I recollect a lot of things that happened there before the war started. I've just been tellin' you about how the English treated the people of Boston, and how those people began to raise companies of soldiers and trained them, so they were ready for the British when they landed in the harbor; but there is nothing in our History books about what the people, along the Western Frontiers were doing. They were just as dissatisfied as the people along the Eastern Shores. In Pittsylvania County no one knew very much about what was happening in Boston: but they were having troubles of their own, and knew that they didn't like what was happening to them, right there at home. There was a large county west of Pittsylvania County that was called Fincastle County, and was made up of all the southwestern part of Virginia, and all of what is now called Kentucky. Many of the settlers were Scotch-Irish, who had come to America after having trouble with England, at home: and they said that the Tory Party, in England, was trying to provoke the colonists into doing something that would

give them an excuse to declare war and take away the Charters of Self Government from the Colonies, so that they could be ruled like the West Indian Islands and Canada. All of this talk, together with the general dissatisfaction, had stirred the people of the Western Counties to talking of self-government. They raised an army among their own people; and it only took a few uprisings, by the Indians, to get them started.

The forty-second regiment of Pittsylvania County, to which your Uncle William and I belonged, carried our own Pittsylvania County flag. It was painted, in oils, on white silk; and was the only County Flag in the Continental Army. Most of us were from the back woods and we had no uniforms. We wore fringed buck-skin hunting shirts, dyed yellow and brown. Our hand-carved shot bags and powder horns hung from our wide leather belts. Most of us wore fur caps and moccasins; and coarse, hand-woven leggins that came up almost to our thighs:—and each man carried a flint horn, a tomahawk and a scalping knife. Few of us knew anything about soldierin'; but we knew how to fight Indians. From the time we were little children there had been war with the Indians goin' on all around us, and we knew just how an Indian fights: so there was probably no braver, stronger or more likely lot of Indian fighters in the country than those men from Pittsylvania County. And I tell you, men that can fight Indians can fight any body. We fought all along the Western Frontier, and we got to lovin' that wild country, so that most of us moved out there after the war was over. Two of your father's uncles and aunts went to Kentucky, and the rest of the family came to Tennessee. Later your Uncle William went to Georgia; but none of 'em ever went back to Virginia. And we were all born there too."

Uncle Uriah never tired of telling of the adventures of his early life; and he would punctuate his stories by hitting the floor with his wooden leg and slapping his knee with his hand. He was a good teacher and the children loved him: but, as Hamilton and Henry grew older, it was decided that they should have, at least, a year at a real school. Hamilton went first, to stay with his uncle at Knoxville, and attend the Academy. At the end of the first year, it was decided that he should stay another year and graduate. Then Henry went to the same Academy, for the same length of time; and they were considered well educated young gentlemen, when they returned to their home at Evans' Toll Bridge.

CHAPTER V

When the boys were old enough to help their father with the management of the Inn, their Grandfather Evans started to build a handsome stone house at Tazewell, where he could retire and spend his old age free from work and responsibility: but he had only lived there a short time when he began to realize that he was already an old man; for his knees were getting stiff and he had to walk with a cane;—and he could no longer see to read the newspapers, even with the aid of glasses.

Each year, before this, he and his wife Sarah had spent some time at the farm in Jefferson County: but this year (1827) he decided to have a house-warming and have his children and grandchildren visit them, at their new home at Tazewell; so that all of the family could be together once more. Besides other members of his family who lived in Tazewell, there were his own ten children, with their husbands and wives, and twenty-five grandchildren to be included in the gathering. Even his old mother, Mary Evans, who lived on the old home place in Jefferson County, with his son George, planned to come, with the family, to take part in the reunion.

The big stone house with its many bedrooms, bedchests and trundlebeds, was filled to capacity. Some of the family stayed with Uncle Walter Evans, who lived a short distance up the hill; and others stayed with Elijah, and his family, at the Inn. It was a happy and never-to-be-forgotten time; for George Evans, and his wife Sarah, were natural hosts, and were never so happy as when they were entertaining their own kin. As each branch of the family traveled with several servants, there were enough to handle the crowd with dexterity and ease. In fact, most of the slaves, belonging to members of the Evans family, were related to each other; so it was a reunion of the household servants as well as of their masters: and each one felt a personal interest in the success of the gathering, and did his best to have every detail perfect for the great occasion.

Chickens, ducks, wild turkeys and pigs were cooked in the best Southern style; while hot bread, with butter and honey, were served at every meal. Good milk gravy, rice and yams, smoked side meat and hominy, corn cakes and maple syrup, spoon bread swimming in butter, and sweet-potatoes cooked in syrup were among the foods that were always on hand. The children made candy between meals; and there was something to do and something to eat at almost any time of the day or night, while the family were all together. They enjoyed being together so much, and there were so many things for them to talk about, they dreaded to go to bed at night and lose precious time in sleep.

But at last the family celebration was over and the visitors had to say their reluctant good-byes and the big house was quiet once more. George Evans' mother, Mary Evans, and his son George (and his family) were all that remained; and Grandfather Evans began to

realize that the excitement of the days, just passed, had taxed his strength more than he had realized: and as he walked across the room, he felt suddenly sick and dizzy; and sank, unconscious, into the nearest chair. When he regained consciousness Sarah, his wife, was leaning over him and saying: "George! Oh George What's the matter?" and he replied, "Why Honey, I don't know. I feel sort o' numb and dizzy. Reckon I been eatin' too much and havin' too much excitement for an old man." The family were not alarmed about his condition, but he did not leave his bed the next day, and asked to see his sons, Elijah and George.

He said to them: "When a man gets to be my age, it's time for him to put his house in order. I gave your brothers, Jesse and Nathan, farms and stock and furniture when they were married. Now Elijah, I'm goin' to give you a deed to the Inn and the land on both sides of Clinch River at Evans' Bridge,—and this place at Tazewell. George, I'm goin' to give you all that land on the south side of Clinch River, by the run, and three thousand dollars in currency. You can keep on a livin' at the home place in Jefferson County, which I want to be kept for your Maw as long as she lives. I'm a goin' to appoint Elijah and Eliza's husband, William Nelson, to administer the estate. Nelson's a good manager, and can look after everything in Green and Jefferson Counties. His advise is always good."

A few days after Grandfather Evans had arranged for the disposal of his estate and the care of his widow, he closed his eyes in the long sleep that took him to the forefathers he had always revered.

At that time, when a man reached the ripe old age of sixty-five or seventy, he believed that his race of life was nearly run. The Psalmist had said: "The days of our years are three score and ten.": so when sickness came, at that age, he believed that death was near. He did not take useless remedies to prolong his natural life: but put his business in order and provided, as best he could, for those who were to be left behind: then he figuratively folded his arms and waited calmly and confidently for the end. So the fine old gentleman and pioneer, George Evans, followed the custom of his time, and believing that his life's journey was about to end, was ready to enter into that better and more blessed life beyond. He had been a kindly soul, and left the world better because he had lived in it. Those who were left to mourn him (and there were many) followed his body over the mountain to his farm, where he and Sarah had spent so many happy years with their little family, when they were young; and there he was buried, near the old house on the hill.

Grandfather Evans had always been a useful, active man, with a friendly smile and kind word for every one. He had offered a helping hand wherever it was needed; and he was missed by people in many walks of life. While his own family, and those he had befriended, were most affected by his death, the travelers who had looked forward to his cheery smile and words of welcome, when they stopped at Tazewell, felt that they too had lost a friend.

Sarah Evans, his widow, was disconsolate, and could not endure the big stone house without him; so she went back to Jefferson County, to their old home, with her son George. It was there that her younger children had been born, and the happiest years of her life had been spent: so it was there that she could live with her memories, near the grave of her beloved husband.

CHAPTER VI

When Grandfather Evans died in January, 1828, Hamilton was 19 years old, Henry was 17, Matilda 15, and Maria 13. The younger children were: James 10, Sarah 8, Laura 5, Lucy 3 and Lafayette 1 year.

After his father's death Elijah decided to move into the stone house at Tazewell, where the children would be nearer the schools. He still kept his home across the road from the Inn, where he could spend part of his time looking after his business; but he planned to gradually turn over the management of the Inn to Hamilton and Henry; who were well liked and capable of handling the business, with the occasional advise and supervision of their father.

Matilda had grown to be a handsome, high-spirited girl, and was receiving serious attention from the young men of the neighborhood,—and also from other unmarried men who traveled through that part of Tennessee, and made it convenient to stop at the Inn, with the hope of meeting Elijah Evans' oldest daughter, who was locally famous for her wit and beauty. She had received numerous offers of marriage before she was fifteen; but her parents did not want her to marry so young; and she, herself, was not greatly impressed with the idea of marriage. She had always been happy at her father's home; and was afraid that marriage could not compensate for the loss of youth and freedom. If she married she would have to wear a cap and act like a married woman, under the domination of a husband;—who might not be as kind and indulgent as her father. It was unthinkable that she should remain single many years and grow to be an old maid:—but there was plenty of time and plenty of suitors, so she could stay at home a few years longer.

Being the oldest girl, in a large family, Matilda had learned to be a good household manager. Like her Grandfather Evans, she was interested in business and investments, and could handle money with intelligence. She wanted to help her brothers at the Inn; but that was impossible, for it was not considered lady-like for a girl, or young woman, to be connected with any business, unless poverty made it necessary.

After their Grandfather's death, Maria went home with her Aunt Mary and Uncle William Conway, to spend the rest of the winter.

Several years before, Uncle William's foster sister had died and left a little orphan son to the care of her brother. His name was William Conway Hale, and Uncle William and Aunt Mary had taken him into their home and hearts, and treated him, in every way, as if he were their own son. He adored Maria, who was several years older than he; and they grew to be great friends. They called him Billy, to distinguish him from the other members of the family by the name of William. In order to have him properly educated the Conways had a tutor for him, who also taught Maria when she visited them. Maria and Billie not only had their lessons together, but

they also played games and rode horseback together, accompanied by their tutor or a colored groom.

Maria always had a riding horse of her own when she visited her Aunt Mary; and old black Mammy Jane was her personal maid,—to bathe and dress her, to comb her hair and button her shoes, to keep her clothes washed and mended, and to accompany her if she wanted to go any place in the neighborhood. Old Mammy Jane had taken care of Maria every time she visited her Aunt Mary, since she was a baby, and loved her more than any one else in the world.

Aunt Eliza Nelson, Elijah's youngest sister, lived next to Aunt Mary so Billie and Maria went over there frequently, to visit.

Col. William Nelson, whom they called Uncle Will, was a middle-aged man with grey hair and used spectacles when he read; but Aunt Eliza was only nineteen, and played with Bill and Maria like she, too, was a child. The three of them would think of all kinds of jokes to play on Uncle Will;—which he enjoyed as much as though they were all his own children. Their oldest child, three years old, also tried to take part in the fun.

One evening, near twilight, Aunt Eliza borrowed one of Bill's old suits of clothes, which she put on; and, carrying a bundle under her arm, walked up the road and spoke to Col. Nelson, who was sitting on the porch. She said that she was very tired from traveling (on foot) all day, and asked if she could stay there that night. Col. Nelson's kind heart was touched by the boy's sad story and he said, "Why certainly, my boy, just you come in the house and sit down by the fire, and I'll have a bed fixed for you. You must have supper with us too." The boy thanked him and went into a dark corner of the room where he sat down in a chair, and finished telling Col. Nelson a very sad story of the struggles he had had, trying, without funds or friends, to reach a sick mother in Knoxville. Bill and Maria were convulsed with laughter, and had to leave the room, every few minutes, for fear their Uncle Will would suspect something. At last it grew dark and Uncle Will and the servants began to worry about "Missie," who had never stayed out alone, so late, before. The servants were sent everywhere to look for their beloved "Missie," and Uncle Will was starting out himself, when he was stopped by the giggling of the children,—which seemed very heartless at such a time; and becoming suspicious, he lit a candle to have a better look at the poor friendless boy who sat in the dark corner,—and recognized his own wife.

When Maria went home, in the Spring, she found her sister quite engrossed by the attentions of a new suitor,—a successful young lawyer named Gray Garrett. Although he was a number of years older than Matilda, his brilliant mind and stylish clothes made him the most sought-after bachelor in that community. He had been clerk of the Circuit Court, at Tazewell, from 1826 to 1827, and was a successful lawyer and politician. The admiration of such a man was bound to impress a young girl of her age, and so, a year after the death of her grandfather, Matilda became Mrs. Gray Garrett, and moved into her

new home on the side of the hill, a short distance from her father's house at Tazewell.

Her new modern home, her brilliant husband, the prominence of her family, and her own pleasing personality, together with her beauty and wit, made her home one of the social centers of their community. A year and a half later, their only child was born, and her happiness seemed complete.

CHAPTER VII

In September of 1828, when Maria was almost fifteen years old, her Aunt Mary decided that it was high time her little niece should be a real young lady, so she took her to Knoxville and bought her a new corset and beautiful materials to be made into dresses of the latest fashion, by her own dressmaker. When the dresses were finished, Aunt Mary gave a party to introduce her niece; and when Maria appeared at the head of the stairs, wearing her prettiest dress, she looked just like a dainty French doll. Aunt Mary was proud to present her to the guests who had come to visit them from the city, and everything was very gay at the Conway home, for the next few weeks. There were fox hunts and other amusements, during the day, and games and dancing in the evening,—where Maria and Aunt Eliza were always in the midst of the gayest and happiest groups. Old Mammy Jane dressed Maria's hair, and laced her corset so tight she could scarcely breathe,—so that her figure would conform to the latest style; and she was happy in the knowledge that she was always the belle of the party.

Among the guests was a young man (said to be the younger son of an English Earl) who devoted himself to Maria, and she thoroughly enjoyed his attentions, until Bill Hale managed to find her alone in the hall, and told her what he thought of her behavior in encouraging such men. He told her that he was planning to marry her himself, when they were older, and he didn't want to see her going around with an Englishman. Naturally Maria didn't want Bill, who was four years younger, and a mere child, dictating to her, and she politely told him to mind his own business,—which settled the matter, for the time being, but spoiled the rest of the evening for both of them.

The next morning Mammy Jane told Maria that her Aunt Mary wanted to see her in the upstairs sitting room, and when she went there, she and her Aunt Mary had a long talk together. Aunt Mary told her that she and Col. Nelson loved Maria as much as though she were their own daughter, and it would make them very happy if she could care for the young man she had met the night before, who was a wealthy land owner, in their neighborhood. She said that Uncle William planned to leave her some of his property, and that she would be very happy to know that, sometime, Maria would live near her and have some of her beautiful things. Maria did not say anything for, though she had been flattered by the attention shown her by the young Englishman,—and had enjoyed listening to him tell of his travels,—she was already (secretly) more interested in some one else.

He was a young man about five years older than she, who's family lived in Granger County, and who had been apprenticed to a tailor in Kentucky. Whenever he traveled between the tailor's and his father's home, he stopped over night at the Inn; and it was there he sometimes met Maria. His father was the son of an aristocratic

Virginia family, who had lost most of his property and had migrated westward, in an effort to find cheap land and profitable investments.

When they first came to Tennessee their name had been spelled Bittle, and, for no apparent reason, it suddenly became Biddle; so people wondered what shady past had induced them to change their name. They lacked the solid financial security of the best families of that section, and yet Mrs. Biddle held herself aloof from most of the other women at quilting bees, and other social affairs of the community, which added to the unpopularity of the family.

Robert Biddle was tall and slender, with blue eyes and dark brown hair that waved back from his forehead. He would have been exceptionally good looking if his nose had been different, but his nose, which was unusually long and narrow, with a decided hump on the bridge, spoiled the symmetry of his otherwise handsome face. Ordinarily, such a nose would have been considered a calamity; but to the family of Robert Biddle, it was said to be an inheritance from a long line of distinguished ancestors; and was a mark of aristocratic distinction much to be desired. Maria could not see anything desirable about such a nose, and she was sure that Robert would have changed it if he could have done so. However he was different from the other men she knew, and she liked him so much, she soon thought that nothing, not even a different nose, could have added to his aristocratic appearance.

She had first met Robert when, as a little girl, she had visited some relatives in Granger County who lived near the Biddles. There were two girls and two boys at the Biddle home when she first knew them. One girl, Mary Ann, was about the age of Matilda, and Harriett was about two years younger than Maria. The boys were both older, and there was another married son who lived nearby. They were all taller than the Evans family, and, while their eyes were blue, their eye-brows, eye-lashes and hair were almost black; which made them seem very unusual to the people of that community. They were unusual too, for they were a strangely gifted family. They read more than the average family of Eastern Tennessee, and could recite verse after verse of their favorite poems. Mrs. Biddle was a rather grand looking woman who sang and played the zither. She also liked to play games with her children. The children too could play the zither or guitar (the only musical instruments they had), and sing the popular songs of the day, as well as the old songs their parents had learned when they were young in Virginia. The girls also made beautiful colored embroidery and hooked rugs from patterns they drew themselves. Mr. Biddle was seldom there, as his business apparently took him away from home much of the time; but when he was at home he was the best looking and best dressed man in the neighborhood. Mrs. Biddle was always richly dressed in black silk, except in the hot Summer months, when she wore white linen instead. She was the proverbial perfect lady in appearance, and was admired and waited on by every member of her family. The manners of the whole family

were very elegant, and they had a certain polish that was unusual among the people of the frontier.

Maria thought they were the most delightful people she had ever known. Robert, being five years older than she, was quite grown up while she was only a little girl: but later he noticed how pretty and clever she was; and while he was serving his apprenticeship with the Middlesboro tailor he managed to see her often, as he passed through Tazewell.

One day, when he was there for a few hours, he and Maria walked down to the town spring together; and as they sat on the log, beside the spring, he said, "Maria you are the prettiest and sweetest girl I have ever known, and when I get a tailor shop of my own, I want to marry you, if you could love me a little and wait for me. I don't want to marry until I can support a wife as well as her father does, but I will always be good to you if you will only wait for me." Maria told him that she liked him better than any one else she knew, but she warned him not to say anything to her father, for she knew that he would not approve.

At that time, an attractive girl of seventeen was usually married, and was often the mother of one or two children, but Maria finished her seventeenth year without any apparent thought of matrimony. There were always plenty of suitors about, but she kept on weaving linen, hemming ruffles for her brother's shirts, and making dainty dresses for her younger sisters. If any one spoke to her of marriage she laughed and said that she was in no hurry, and that her mother needed her at home. Her tiny hands were always busy for she did most of the family sewing that required special skill; and every one marveled at the beautiful things she made. Her Aunt Mary gave her a gold thimble, and it was just large enough to fit the finger of an average child of eight.

She was smaller and more dainty than Matilda, and more kind and considerate of others than her older sister; but she had the same sense of humor, quick wit and intelligence; so it was natural that she too should be sought after by many of the eligible young men of the neighborhood.

At last, when Robert Biddle had finished his apprenticeship, and had earned enough money to go into business for himself, he opened a tailor shop in Tazewell, and devoted his spare time to courting Maria. It was then that the family began to suspect the true state of affairs.

Aunt Mary was heart-broken, as well as angry, to find that Maria preferred a tradesman, to a gentleman farmer for a husband. The "best people" of Eastern Tennessee were of English, Welch and Scotch ancestry, and their fore-fathers had brought many of their customs and prejudices with them from their homes across the sea, where tradespeople had little or no social standing. An Inn-Keeper was somewhat different, for he was usually the best informed man of the neighborhood, and was considered a person of importance. The Evanses and their friends considered tradespeople so inferior to them

that they had never met them on terms of social equality; and to accept one into the family seemed impossible; so everything was done to discourage the friendship between Maria and Robert Biddle.

Elijah inquired into the history of the Biddle family, and found that they belonged to an ever increasing type of Americans who were coming west from the older sections of the South. They were not fundamentally pioneers, but were the descendants of the younger sons of the old aristocratic families of Virginia, who did not have enough land to support themselves at home, and migrated further west in search of cheaper land and greater opportunities.

Robert's father, Benjamin Biddle, and wife Mary (called Polly) Capell Biddle, were descended from some of the wealthiest and most aristocratic families of Colonial Virginia, but Benjamin had lost his inheritance, and the manor house with the landed estate of his mother, was to descend to his younger brother. At the time of his marriage to Polly Capell, his father (Kirby Biddle) had given him a plantation, with a house and furniture, slaves and stock; while Polly's father had also given them land and slaves; but poor Benjamin had been brought up to be a gentleman who knew of no practical way to make a living, and Polly was useless as a helpmate. She had been an only daughter in a large family of boys and had been thoroughly humored and spoiled. She had always had several personal servants, or slaves, and every whim had been gratified as long as her father had lived. They were very delightful people, but neither of them knew anything about managing a plantation; and, after their marriage, they kept on entertaining as their parents had done; so their expenses were always more than their income. Finally they decided to leave the part of Virginia where their ancestors had lived for six generations, and where they were related to most of the prominent families of two counties. He sold his property (she rented hers to one of her brothers) and bought a plantation in the central part of Virginia, where they lived for a few years; but eventually they had the same trouble there. According to their ideas, ladies and gentlemen had to live up to certain standards, and they could never maintain those standards on the income from their plantation; so Benjamin tried to increase his income by buying and selling slaves. Each time they sold their home and bought a new place, they moved further west, until they found themselves in Tennessee about the time the older boys were reaching manhood.

Polly had a most buoyant nature, and insisted on having everything she thought she needed; for she always considered their poverty an accident which would be overcome when Benjamin made a fortune and established an estate for his family. But Benjamin had known, for a long time, that he could never hope to get ahead of his expenses, and that his boys must be ready, as soon as possible, to look out for themselves.

They had always hoped to educate their boys for professional careers; but, as there was no money to send them to college, the only thing left for them to do was to apprentice them to some craftsman,

where they could learn trades and be prepared to make a living. As far as they knew, no one, on either side of their family, had ever been a tradesman; and it was not easy for them to deliberately place their boys on a lower social level than their relatives in Virginia, who might be ashamed of them when they returned to their old home. Polly had never sold the old Capell home, which she had inherited from her father; for she always planned to return there after they had made their fortune and were once more able to live as they had in the old days.

The boys, however, had grown up in the west and cared more about making a comfortable living than they did about the social customs and ideas of people, in Virginia, whom they did not even remember: so Benjamin Robert (called Robert so as not to confuse him with his father) was apprenticed to a tailor, and his brother John (called Jack) was apprenticed to a blacksmith. As the boys were intelligent and fairly well educated, they learned rapidly, and became real craftsmen in the trades they had chosen, by the time their apprenticeship was over.

Robert's sister, Mary Ann Biddle, had married William Lee Cardwell (a cousin of Robert Lee of Virginia) in Tennessee, in 1829, and had gone to Illinois. She wrote glowing accounts of the new country, where thousands of acres of fine deep new soil could be bought for almost nothing; so her father decided to move to Illinois, with his family, in the Spring.

Benjamin Biddle had never been a true pioneer. He had never been the kind of man who settled on Government land, built a primitive home for his family, and cleared his land for cultivation; while he earned his living from fishing, hunting, trapping and trading, until crops could be raised.

He was more of a speculator, who went into a new country after the first pioneers had done the development work, become discouraged, and moved on to newer and better (?) places further west. He watched the delinquent tax lists carefully; and was often able to buy fine, improved property, at a sheriff's sale, for the amount of the unpaid taxes. He and Polly both had the gift of homemaking; and, after living in a place for a short time, were usually able to sell at a good profit.

In Eastern Tennessee the amount of good "bottom land" was very limited; but in Illinois there were thousands of acres of rich, level, prairie land for farming. There, for the first time, he was able to buy a large acreage of fine agricultural land, which he divided into small farms and sold to newcomers who were trying to farm without slaves.

It was early in 1830 that Polly (who was sure that Illinois land would produce their long-looked-for fortune) and Benjamin, with their son Jack, their daughter Harriett and little, three year old Angeline, settled in Sangamon County, Illinois.

Their son Charles Biddle had married Elizabeth Greenlee (a daughter of Granger County pioneers), continued to live on the home place: while Robert opened his shop at Tazewell, and prospered from the very beginning.

CHAPTER VIII

When Aunt Mary Conway realized that Maria was becoming seriously interested in the young tailor, she decided that it would be wise to send her away to school, where she would meet new people and forget the very charming, but undesirable, young man who was seeing her so often at Tazewell.

She had to acknowledge that Robert was a gentleman in everything but his profession; but it was unthinkable that dainty, little Maria should marry a penniless tradesman, whose parents would always be a financial burden to him, even if he were so fortunate as to succeed in his business or trade.

She spent some time in Tazewell talking the matter over with her brother Elijah and his wife Ruth; and they all agreed that they must help Maria to make a suitable marriage. It had been a sort of tradition, in the Evans family, that the daughters all married men of wealth and position:—that is all except poor Aunt Elizabeth (Elijah's aunt) who had married a handsome young Irish adventurer, Thomas Carlin, who came to America about the time of the American Revolution, and took her into the wilds of Kentucky to make a home and raise a family in true pioneer fashion. She came back to Tennessee, in 1805, a widow with seven children. If she ever regretted her marriage no one knew it; and she was very proud of her family, who were later numbered among the most prominent citizens of Illinois and Kentucky, where they finally settled. Maria could never believe that Aunt Elizabeth's marriage was a mistake; for she loved her Carlin cousins and was very proud of them: but Aunt Mary still considered her Aunt Elizabeth's marriage one of the tragedies of the Evans' family.

Maria had so many admirers her father and mother did not consider her friendship with Robert Biddle a very serious matter:—and then too, —they rather liked him. He was somewhat proud and arrogant, in his manner, but under all circumstances he was a gentleman,—courteous, kind, reliable and generous. Maria thought that she could not expect more of any one; but her family agreed that she must not be consigned to a life of poverty,—and that if they could get her away from Tazewell, she might realize the mistake she was making: so Aunt Mary insisted on sending her away to boarding school.

The Knoxville Female Academy, which had been opened a short time before, was considered one of the best schools in the South; and the daughters of old aristocratic families of Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, and Alabama were being sent there for their higher education. The first classes finishing the course of study did not receive any graduation degree, but, some years later, the young ladies graduating from the Academy received a diploma, granting them the degree of "Mistress of Polite Literature." Unfortunately that was not done until after Maria had finished the prescribed course of study.

Several of Maria's friends, from Knoxville and Chucky, were

attending the school, and she was delighted with the idea of living with them while she finished her education. Her father thought that the expense was too great for such an unnecessary thing as an advanced education for a girl; but Aunt Mary was determined that Maria should go, and insisted on paying all of the expense herself, which was considered a large amount, at that time. The tuition, alone, was ten dollars for each session. There was no charge for room rent, but the price of board, fire wood, and candles amounted to one dollar and a half each week. Maria also took ornamental needlework, on lace and muslin, which was five dollars extra each session. All students had to recite, once a week, on the Sacred Scriptures; and Maria, who always stood at the head of that class, became so interested in Bible-study, she continued it through the rest of her life.

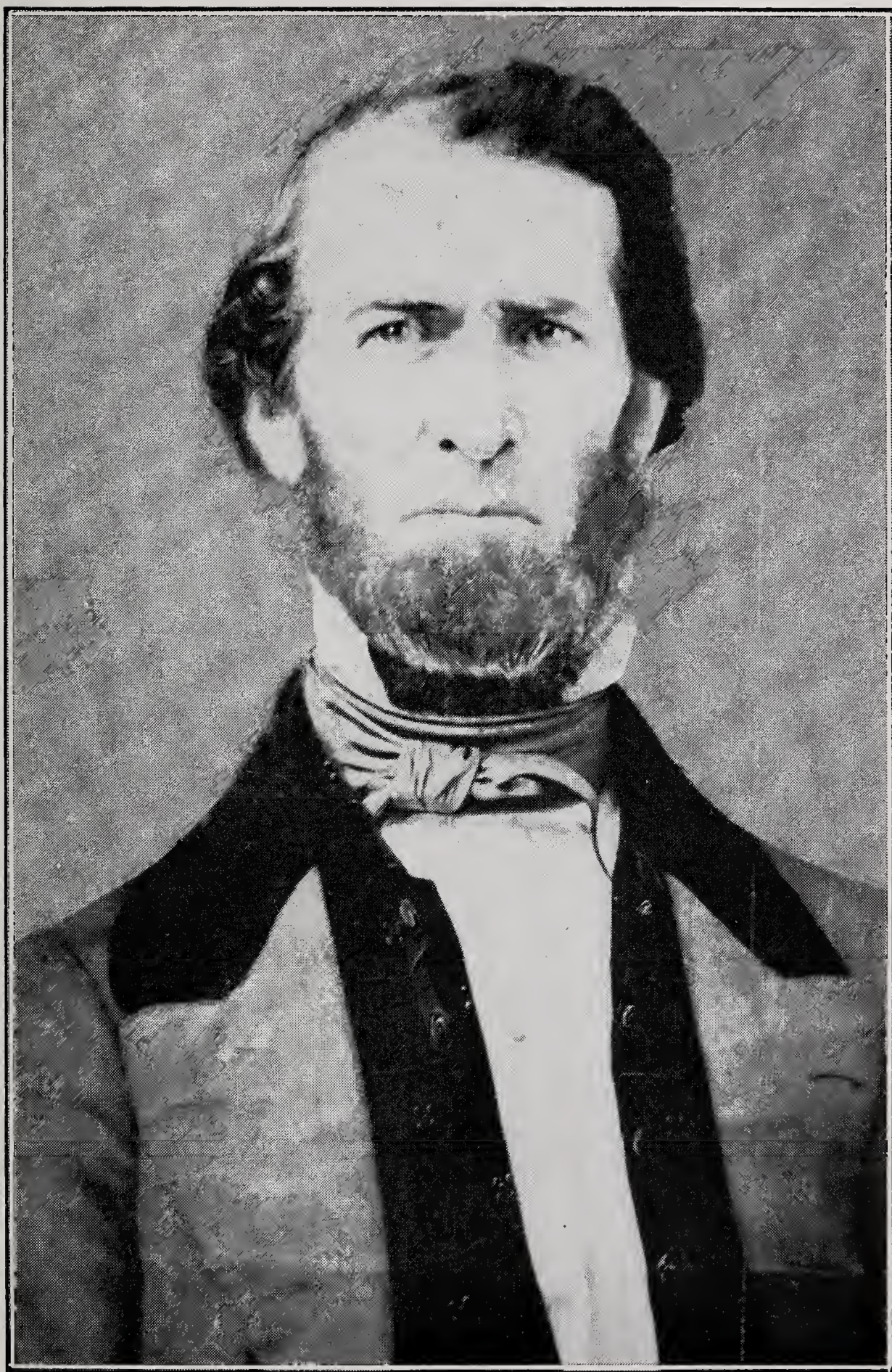
The first year, at the Academy, she studied Arithmetic, and Geography (with the drawing of maps and "the solution of the problems of the terrestrial Globe"), Rhetoric, Astronomy, and the History of Natural Philosophy.

The next year she had the same studies with an advanced teacher, and an additional five dollars tuition. The second year Astronomy, included "the solution of the problems of the Celestial Globe." There were also lectures on "Good Manners and Proper Behavior in Polite Society." Maria also took a course in Fancy Weaving and Rug Making.

The school year was divided into two sessions. The winter session of five months, began on November first and continued until March 31st; and the summer session started on the first of May and continued until September 30th; so Maria had vacation during the months of April and October, when she could visit her family and Aunt Mary.

She had a number of relatives in Knoxville, and her father and sister Matilda went to see her once or twice each session. Then too, her Aunt Mary and Bill Hale were in Knoxville, several times each year and took her to places of interest; but she would get homesick, at times, for her mother and younger brothers and sisters. Aunt Mary, who was anxious to keep her away from Tazewell, encouraged Maria to accept invitations of her school-mates to visit them during a part of her vacations;—and then she had to spend part of her time with Aunt Mary, where gay parties were planned in her honor; so there was very little time left for her to be with her own family,—or to see Robert Biddle. This was just what they had all planned.

Thus time passed rapidly during those two happy years at Knoxville Female Academy; and Maria was happy too, for she was a great favorite with her school-mates. She seemed to radiate sunshine and comfort wherever she went; so she was welcomed by all of the different groups of girls at the school. She was always entertaining and amusing, for no one else had such a fund of funny stories and conundrums at the tongue's end, as she. She was a leader among those who played harmless practical jokes on the more serious-minded girls of the institution; and yet, with all of her pranks and jokes she had a fund of common sense that was unusual in one of her age.



BENJAMIN ROBERT BIDDLE
About 1860

She loved friends more than books, so she was seldom at the head of her class; but she was never among those who were at the foot of the class either. There were two things in which she always excelled;—one was needle-work, and the other was weaving. She was especially clever in working out new designs, and her work was frequently placed on exhibition at the Academy, to show visitors what the students learned at the institution. When Maria had a few days (or weeks) at home, she tried to teach her younger sisters the most useful things she had learned at school.

Sarah was beginning to grow up and learned rapidly; and Laura, who was almost nine, was eager to make pretty things like her sister Maria; while dear little Lucy Jane, who was seven, could knit and weave as well as Maria did at her age.

Shortly before Maria finished her last year at the Academy, Robert went to Knoxville, where they met and talked over their future plans. Robert knew that he was not included in Aunt Mary's schemes for Maria's future, but he was not willing to give up his own dream of happiness if Maria cared for him.

One of Aunt Mary's objections to Robert was that the family had changed its name; which might indicate that there was something unsavory in their past; so Maria asked him about it and he said, "For six generations our family lived in southeastern Virginia, and spelled their name Bittle, Bittell and Bittelle. In fact my grandfather said that there had been Bittls, Briddells, Brittles and Biddles living in that part of Virginia since early Colonial times; and that there was a tradition that they all descended from two brothers who came to America, among the first Quaker Colonists who sought refuge across the sea. While Bittle was a well known name in our part of Virginia, it was strange to other parts of the country; and, as we moved westward, people usually called us Biddle until we corrected them: but it was not until we came to Tennessee that we thought of changing the name.

When my father first came out here he met a man by the name of Thomas Biddle, who told him the story of his family; and said that he was sure we all had the same ancestors. His family had been Quakers. A mother and two sons left England, and came to America, to avoid persecution. The mother and one brother went to Pennsylvania, and the other brother went south where the name was, no doubt, misspelled by the clerk who made out the first land grants: so we decided that our name had been really Biddle, instead of Bittle. I persuaded father to change it at that time; and since then we have been known by the name of Biddle. Do you think we did anything wrong?"

Maria assured him that she thought they had done perfectly right; and that it was a matter of small importance anyway. Then he went on to tell her about learning a trade, and said: "You know my father was born a gentleman, in southeastern Virginia, and was never taught anything about earning a living. His people had always had large plantations and plenty of slaves to work them: but the land was

beginning to wear out; and, with each generation, the plantations were divided into smaller farms; so the younger sons no longer inherited enough to make a living, and they were quite helpless. If they had learned some trade they could have earned an honest living,—so my brother and I decided that every man should have a trade so that he could be independent and useful. Our ancestors prided themselves on being ladies and gentlemen: and, as I was born into that kind of a family,—with all of its ideals and traditions—I think that I too am a gentleman as long as I am worthy of that heritage. If I maintain certain social standards, am truthful and honest, am kind and considerate of others, and keep my own self respect, I shall consider myself a gentleman no matter what kind of menial work I may have to do to earn a living. No man can be degraded by doing any honest work. I am sure that I am more of a gentleman than many of the rich farmers whose clothes I make.” Maria told him that, in her estimation, no one could be finer than he, and then he went on to tell her more of his plans, and he said: “I have thought it all over, and am afraid that our married life could not be happy if we lived here among all of your relatives, who are so opposed to me as your husband. My father writes, from Illinois, that Springfield is a rapidly growing town, and that there is money to be made there in land speculation; so I have decided to go to Springfield, if you will let me come back for you as soon as I am established there.” Maria promised to be ready when he came for her, but cautioned him not to tell anyone of their plans.

Robert easily disposed of his business before leaving Tazewell, and the family (especially Aunt Mary) thought that their plans for Maria’s future were now safe. Ruth, who liked Robert, was not so sure that he would give up the girl of his choice so easily, but she said nothing, and Maria did not confide in her. Matilda was the only one to whom she told her secret, and it was through her that Maria was able to carry on her correspondence with her sweetheart in Illinois.

Knowing that her stay at home would not be very long, after she returned from school at Knoxville, Maria tried to accomplish all that she could in the year that followed. One thing she wanted to do was to get better acquainted with her new sister (Hamilton’s wife) who had come into the family about the time she had gone away to school. Minerva was an interesting and fascinating person to know;—with an adventurous spirit and personal charm that might have been inherited from her famous ancestor, Capt. John Smith. Her buoyant nature and cheerful friendliness, not only made her an ideal companion for her husband, but she was also a great asset to him as a hostess to the wives and daughters of the travelers who stopped at the Inn. Maria soon grew very fond of her, and always thought of her as though she were indeed her own sister. Hamilton and Minerva lived in the old Evans’ home across the road from the Inn.

Maria also helped her mother manage the household and care for the five younger children, and insisted that her mother, who had been so closely confined at home by her large family, should go away to

visit Grandmother Sarah Evans in Jefferson County, and Aunt Mary and Aunt Elizabeth at Chucky, while she (Maria) managed the household and cared for the children at home.

Ruth could not be persuaded to go away and leave all of her children behind, but at last it was decided that she would take William, her youngest child, with her; and Elijah had the team hitched to the light wagon, and drove with them over the mountains to his mother's home. He only stayed a day or two to visit his mother and his brother George, and then went back to Tazewell: for his brother George would take Ruth and little William over to Chucky, when she had finished her visit with them. It was the first real vacation Ruth had had, away from home and the care of her children, for twenty-five years; and she returned, after her visit, feeling younger and gayer than she had for many years. Uncle William Conway and Aunt Mary brought her home, and asked Maria to go back with them when they returned to Chucky.

As usual, it was very gay at Aunt Mary's, but Maria did not have the care-free times, as a young lady, that she had had when she could romp and play, as a little girl. Aunt Eliza still lived on the next farm, but she then had four children, and seldom joined in their games; and Uncle Will seemed to be aging rapidly. Bill too was changed, for he had grown to be a young man who thought he was in love with her, and that was embarrassing for Maria, but as they liked many of the same things, they still had good times together.

Before Maria returned to Tazewell, Aunt Mary called her into her up-stairs sitting-room, and they had a long talk together. It was a very serious talk, and Aunt Mary told her that she must begin to think about getting married, for she was almost nineteen and would soon be considered an old maid. It would not be long before her sister Sarah would be old enough to be married, and it would be a great handicap to her to have an older, unmarried sister. But Maria said that she was happy staying at home with her mother for awhile, after being away at school for such a long time. She added that, "No doubt later, she would have to marry some one," and that she could think about it then.

When it was time for her to go home Uncle William Conway gave her the horse she had always had to ride, when she visited them, and, with their colored groom riding ahead, and Bill on his horse beside her, she was escorted, over the tree covered mountain road, to Tazewell.

It took two days to make the trip, and they stayed over night with some of the Evans' relatives in Granger County. They had time to talk about many things on that trip. Maria assured Bill that she was much too old for him to marry, and he acknowledged that there was another girl he also admired.

When, at last, they felt that they thoroughly understood each other, their old feeling of happy comradeship returned, and they rode light-heartedly on through the brilliantly colored hills, for it was late

in October and the trees were clothed in Autumn reds and golds. There was a tang of frost in the air that made the horses pull at their bits, and while Bill and Maria let them race, for a short distance, over the hard ground, they laughed, their blood tingled, and they were glad, for they knew that they were real friends and comrades once more. Maria even told him about Robert, and her plans for the future.

CHAPTER IX

Through the nights of November 12th and 13th, 1831, the heavens were lit up by myriads of shooting (or falling) stars, and the people of the South thought that the end of the world was at hand. Many persons, at that time, believed that the second coming of Christ, and the Judgment Day, might be looked for at any time; so any unusual disturbance was feared as the beginning of the end. However it was only the most credulous and superstitious who were greatly affected by the sight of the "falling stars" of 1831. But on the nights of November 12th and 13th, 1832, the heavens were lit up by almost constant showers of "falling stars" and the people of the South were terrified as they thought that the end of time and the destruction of the world upon them. The churches were filled with penitent people who wept and prayed, and begged on their knees, that their sins might be forgiven before they, and all the world, were destroyed by the righteous anger of a vengeful God. The negroes were even more excited and fear-stricken than the whites; and were of little use, on the farms for days afterward. They gathered together, in groups, and confessed their sins, while they sang and prayed for forgiveness; and made solemn promises to God, that they would devote their lives to Him and His work, if He would only give them one more chance.

When at last the stars stopped falling, the slaves, and their masters as well, believed that their prayers had been answered, and their sins had been forgiven; and those two nights of terror were followed by days of rejoicing and thanksgiving. The churches then held great revivals, and although nearly every one was a member of some church, the people flocked to the mourner's bench and humbled themselves and prayed for salvation; and Christ-like behavior became more popular and universal, during the next weeks that followed the falling of the stars, than ever before:—when a temporarily regenerated people tried to follow His teachings in all of the acts of their daily lives.

Maria was at the Academy at Knoxville through those trying times of 1831 and 1832, and the students, like most of the people of the South were afraid that the end of the world was near. But their Astronomy teacher assured them that there had been many other times, in the history of the world, when people had been frightened by falling stars; but that astronomers knew that the stars did not really fall at all. Meteors occasionally crossed the Earth's orbit, and looked like stars as they fell and glowed in upper space; but, for some reason, they usually exploded or disintegrated when they reached the Earth's atmosphere and fell in the form of meteoric dust; so that there was probably nothing to fear.

When the Earth was not destroyed, in 1832, the people who had been so frightened, and had vowed (if they were spared) to devote their lives to serving the Lord, soon forgot all about their promises and went on living exactly as they had done before: so, when the shower of stars started again on the 12th of November, 1833, they

suddenly realized how wicked they had been, and were more terrified than ever, at what they considered a new manifestation of the anger of God. They were sure that He would show them no mercy this time, and yet they had His word that He was a God of love and mercy,—and so they continued to pray.

There were other reasons, besides that terrible spectacle of the falling stars, for believing that the end of the world was near; for many new and fanatical religious denominations had sprung up about that time, which stressed the necessity for immediate preparation for death; as the time for the second coming of Christ was thought to be at hand. The Latter-Day-Saints, known as Mormons, preached of the fulfillment of time; and, while there were practically none of them in Tennessee, they were talked about and their doctrines influenced the religious thought of the times.

Maria explained, to her family, what she had learned about “falling stars” at the Academy, and her father told them what he had read on the subject. He also retold the stories he had heard from travelers from many parts of the world, who had stopped at the Inn and whiled away the time by telling of strange things they had seen, or heard, in their travels. These stories were often exaggerated, and the truth was mixed with the superstitious ideas of the times and the imagination of the tellers; but unusual phenomena of the skies had been one of the main subjects of conversation, throughout the South, since the first shower of shooting stars fell in November, two years before.

The result of these conversations had been to show that, no matter how terrifying all former displays in the heavens had been, they had passed harmlessly away; and there was nothing to fear; for God was everywhere and all was well with those who love Him and keep His commandments.

The night of the 12th of November, 1833, and the day of the 13th passed very much as the same days had the year before: and on the evening of the 13th the younger children were put to bed early; but William and Amanda were the only ones who could sleep. They were two and four years old, and were too young to understand the nervous tension and terrifying fear that was felt by the people about them. The older children slept very little, if at all; and about ten o'clock, when the meteors became as thick as the flakes of falling snow, the negroes, on the slope below the house, began to sing and moan and pray so loudly no one, but the babies, could even pretend to sleep any more. The children, who had gone to bed, were allowed to put on their clothes and wraps over their night clothes, and go out on the porch with the grown up members of the family; and all were spell-bound as they watched the awe-inspiring sight of a hail of fire from heaven, that seemed to fall to earth all about them, and yet left them unhurt. They felt sure that the end was not far off; for, notwithstanding their thoughtful preparation for the event, and the assurance that no harm would come to them, the experience was so terrifying their only thought was to stay close together; so that they would not be separated in death. Maria and her Mother went into the house

and brought William and Amanda out, in their arms, and held them close,—while they slept in blissful ignorance of the tragedy of fear that gripped millions of Americans that night.

The falling stars all seemed to come from one point in the heavens and as they came toward the Earth, phosphorescent lines seemed to follow along their course, and appeared to spread like ribs of fire of a great umbrella of moving stars that covered the earth. The smaller meteors fell like snowflakes of fire,—leaving lines of light behind them, with occasional large fire-balls (some almost as large as the moon) darting forth and leaving luminous trails behind them that were visible for several minutes afterward.

Toward morning as the little group sat close together, talking in whispers, so as not to waken the two sleeping children, Elijah said, "It is not likely that any one who has ever lived, has seen a more terrible, grand and inspiring sight than we have seen this night. It looked as though the stars all came from the center of the Universe, perhaps from the throne of God, from which He sends us this message of His Might and Power, together with the proof of his Goodness and Mercy; for while these meteors and balls of fire were showered from the Heavens, and could easily have destroyed all of the people of the Earth, they only surrounded us with a beauty and majesty beyond description. We never knew before, how true were the Psalmist's words when he said, "The Heavens declare the Glory of God."

There was no secession of the meteoric display all night, until the brilliance of the rising sun gradually hid it from a relieved and repentant world.

CHAPTER X

Robert Biddle was an exceptionally good tailor, and had done well while in business at Tazewell. He had sent money regularly to his parents, and had also saved enough to start in business when he reached Springfield in the early Spring of 1833. Robert himself dressed with style and distinction, and was a person who would be noticed when he went, as a stranger, to a pioneer village. His father, brother, and brother-in-law had been living near Springfield for some time before he went to Illinois, and they introduced him to their friends and neighbors; but his own polished manners and pleasing personality were his greatest assets in building up a business among the type of people who were financially able to wear clothes of the latest cut and best materials.

His business was good from the first, and it was only a short time before he had to hire an extra tailor to work for him and look after the business, when he was away, for he had bought an eighty acre farm on Lick Creek, near his father's place, where he expected to raise fine horses and other stock;—and that required some of his attention.

At the end of his first year, in Springfield, he felt that he was financially able to care for a wife; and started making arrangements to go to Tazewell for Maria. His mother had been homesick for some of her Tennessee friends, and was anxious to go to Granger County to visit her son Charles and see the grandchildren she had left behind when they moved to Illinois; so Robert bought a new spring wagon, with a covered top for the trip. They carried food to eat along the way, and bedding, so that they could sleep in the wagon when necessary. At last, when everything was ready, he hitched up his fine span of horses, and with his mother and sister Angeline (who was then seven years old) on the seat beside him, they started for Tennessee.

The roads were narrow and rough, consisting largely of parallel ruts across the prairie, and then, when they reached the mountains, they were narrow and steep, so they had to travel slowly most of the way;—for Robert always considered his horses and never tired them more than necessary. At last, after traveling for almost three weeks (except on Sunday when they, and their horses rested) they reached Tazewell; and Robert hitched his horses to the tree in front of the Evans' stone house. Maria saw him from one of the up-stairs windows, and quickly brushed her hair, and primped a little, before one of the servants came to tell her that he was there.

He had courteously asked first, to see her mother, and she in turn, had gone out to the wagon to meet his mother, and invite them to come in and stay to dinner. Then while Mrs. Biddle and mother Evans were exchanging ideas about quilt patterns and new methods of preserving fruit, Robert and Maria took Angeline out to meet Lucy Jane and her rag dolls. After the children had been disposed of, they

walked down by the negro cabins, and across the road to the town spring, where they pretended they had to get some drinking water. However they did not deceive anyone, for the family all knew that they wanted to be alone, so that they could talk together without the reserve young people naturally feel in the presence of others.

Robert told Maria that he was going to take his mother and sister over to Granger County to visit his brother Charles, and would be back for her in four or five days; but, he said, he was first going to ask her father for permission to marry her. Maria was sure that her father would never consent to her marriage to Robert, but Robert was determined to speak to him; for, he said, "No gentleman would take a girl away from her father's home without first trying to get his approval."

Mrs. Evans invited Mrs. Biddle and Robert to stay longer at her home, but they were anxious to be on their way; so they thanked Mrs. Evans for her hospitality and drove down the road that led to Evans' Toll Bridge and Granger County.

That night Elijah Evans asked Maria if she really planned to marry Robert Biddle, and when she told him that she did, he said, "Well, Maria, I reckon Robert is a likely young man, and he has good manners; but you are a little mite of a girl, and should never have to lift and carry, like the Yankee women do. We've always had slaves to do all the hard work, and you've never even had to ready up your own room, lest you felt like it. I've heard tell that the Yankee women out there in Illinois even do their own washin' and ironin', and I don't like to think of you'r goin' there. The Biddles are great spenders too, and people like them are most always poor. You don't know what it's like to be poor, and I don't want you to have to find out. I only want you to be happy, and the Biddles aren't our kind of folks. So I calculate you'd be better off if you'd stay here amongst your own kin. We all'd like to see you marry Jesse Hirst. He's a fine young man and could give you a good home, near your own folks, but if you won't have him, why can't you take one of the other men who've asked if they could court you? They're our kind of people, and any one of them would make you a good husband."

Maria told him that Jesse Hirst was just like one of her own brothers, and she could never think of marrying him, even though he was really no blood relation, and most of the other men he spoke of were almost as old as he, and she couldn't marry a man as old as her father. Even though most girls married men much older than they were, she was sure she would be happier with some one nearer her own age. At last he said, "Well, Maria, my little one, you are past eighteen and can do as you please. I want to see you happy, and will never give my consent for you to marry Robert Biddle, for I'm sure you'll be sorry if you do."

For the next few days Maria worked constantly all day, and far into the night, by candlelight, to finish a bedspread she was weaving, and to get her linen and bedding (that she had been making for years),

packed into her chest, which, without her father's consent to her marriage, would be her only dowry.

On the morning of May the 13th, (1834) Robert came back, and she told him that she was ready to meet him as she had promised. She told her mother that she had something to take to Mrs. Regan, the minister's wife, and asked her to walk over there with her. They stopped at Matilda's and suggested that she walk up the hill with them too. When they arrived at Mr. Regan's home Robert was there, and they were married as they had planned. Mother Evans and Matilda both cried, for it seemed that Maria was going away forever, but Robert told them that the roads were getting better all of the time, and that she would surely be able to come back to visit them every year.

Father Evans was away from home, and Maria did not see him again, but she went home with her mother, and as she was then a married woman, she covered her hair with a very becoming black lace cap, in accordance with the custom of the time. Matilda and her husband came down to dinner and they all tried to be very gay, but it was an effort to keep up good spirits when it came time to say good-bye. After loading the chest, and other things belonging to Maria, into the wagon, mother Evans insisted on giving them a feather bed and pillows. In fact she kept bringing things to them until the back of the wagon was almost filled before they were ready to go. As Maria went back into the house to tell one of the servants good-bye, her mother handed her a little buckskin bag containing money, and told her that she must keep it for a "nest-egg" so that she would always have something for an emergency, when she really needed it. Maria thanked her and said, "Oh mother I wish we could take you with us; but you and paw must come to visit us when we get our home in Springfield." Her mother replied, "Well Maria, we'll have to wait 'till the young ones are older, and while I'm right pert for my age, I'd be afraid to wagon it that far just for a visit; but I allow Tillie and me could ride a piece of the way with you now." They had two saddle horses brought to the gate, and rode a few miles down the road with Robert and Maria before they had to say good-bye.

As Maria had never been out of north-eastern Tennessee before, the trip seemed very wonderful to her. Then too, Robert's brother Jack had made springs which he put under the seat of the new spring wagon, which made it as comfortable as a carriage, and much more practical for the long trip. Maria wanted to take her riding horse with her to her new home; so it was tied to the back of the wagon.

Maria had many relatives in Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois, who lived near "the Main Kentucky Road," so they sometimes stopped over night with some of her own people. They also knew where the best Inns were to be found, and usually managed to have a good meal and bed, with pleasant surroundings, at the end of each day's travel. But sometimes unforeseen things happened, and they were not able to reach their destination. One day they were stopped by a tree that had fallen across the road. Robert had to cut the tree in two places,

and roll the heavy log away, before they could pass. By the time they were on their way again, they could hear the distant roll of thunder, and the sky had become overcast. The lightning flashes gradually came nearer, the thunder was almost deafening, and the frightened horses were getting hard to manage,—when suddenly the lightning hit something near by with a crash that shook the very earth, and the terrified horses started to run. Robert kept them under control as they tired themselves out running over the rough road. Then, a few minutes later the rain came down in torrents, and the sky grew so black they could scarcely see the road ahead. They were many miles from any village or other settlement, but they came upon an old abandoned log cabin, with a lean-to that had been used for stock. It seemed to them, almost as though it had been put there in answer to their unspoken prayer, and Robert drove the horses into the lean-to and fed them from the grain-bags they carried with them. There was a fire-place in the cabin, and some dry sticks lying around, with which they soon had enough fire to make tea and broil some bacon. They made a bed in the back of the wagon, and were as warm and dry as if they had been at home. The next day was clear, and in the early morning they could hear the birds in the trees, and the quail calling from the brush at the side of the clearing. Robert hobbled the horses so that they could graze, and then came back in a few minutes with some quail eggs, which they added to their bacon and bread for breakfast.

After living all of her life in the hills, the miles and miles of level prairie land in Illinois seemed very monotonous to Maria; but the grass was tall and green and made fine feed for their horses. The wild-flowers were beautiful too. The whole landscape was often colored by them, but Maria knew that she would always miss the hills. She was very much disappointed in Springfield too. At Tazewell they could always go out after a rain without getting their feet wet or muddy, for the rain made little rivulets of the wheel ruts in the streets, and ran rapidly down the hill, leaving the rocky soil almost dry a few minutes after the storm was over; but the water stood on the streets of Springfield, for days after each rain, and made them channels of mud and mire.

Maria and Robert stayed at the same boarding-house where he had lived before they were married, as it was conveniently near his shop, and was said to be the best place of its kind in the town. While they stayed there Maria used to go to the back room of the shop to watch Robert and his men at work. The most interesting thing there was Robert, himself, when he cut out the suits. First, he would stretch the cloth on the long tailor's table, and sponge it carefully so that it would shrink; and then he would pin the paper (on which he had written the measurements of the man whose suit he was to make) on the table, beside the cloth. Then, with the aid of a tape-measure, a three-foot rule, a piece of string, and some white chalk, he would mark out the pattern on the cloth, then cut with his shears, through the lines he had marked. One day when he was cutting out a vest

from a piece of silk brocade, he said, "I'm afraid we'll have trouble with the buttonholes on this vest, for the silk is going to ravel and will be hard to work with. The buttons and buttonholes will be the making of the vest, if the buttonholes are perfect, but if they are not the vest will be ruined." Then Maria said, "Give me a piece of the silk and let me try to make a buttonhole in it; and then, if you think I can do it well enough, I'll take the vest home and work all of the buttonholes for you."

When she showed them the sample button-hole she had made, they agreed that it was perfect. In fact it was better than either of the tailors could make; so she took the vest home and finished it. And that was how she happened (from that time on) to make most of the button-holes that went out of the shop.

It was very particular work, as each stitch had to be exactly right, and required perfect eyesight; but, as she was usually busy with other things during the day, she did most of that fine work at night by candle light. Robert would read aloud, to her, while she worked button-holes in the dark suits that were fashionable at that time. Her back would often ache and her eyes would smart, long before she had finished and could go to bed; but she never complained for she was happy in the knowledge that she could be such a help to her husband. Robert was always thinking of her happiness, and bringing her presents. One time, during the first years of their marriage, he bought the material and made a beautiful silk dress for her. It was cut according to the latest European fashion; and, when she wore it, she was the best dressed woman in Springfield. A number of other women tried to get him to make dresses for them, but he would not do it. He said that he was a man's tailor and did not make women's clothes, except, once in a while, when he wanted to make a present for his wife or mother.

Maria did not tell Robert about the money her mother had given her; but kept it carefully hidden away, and added a little to it from time to time, so that she could always have something on hand in case of an emergency; for the Biddle's lavish spending kept her somewhat anxious about the future, even though Robert seemed to be a good business man and usually made an ample profit on all of his investments. However he never kept much money on hand, for he said that "a man should keep his money circulating." "Money," he said, "is only a medium of value, and is of no use except when it is in circulation." Maria could not understand that kind of reasoning (in fact she never did), for her family had had very different ideas. They had never bought property except when they wanted to improve it for their own use, and had always kept enough money on hand for emergencies, if bad crops or flood or fire made extra spending necessary. In fact they always had enough currency hidden away to give them a feeling of comfortable security, at all times; and debt was something to be abhorred almost as much as death itself. On the other hand Robert considered debt a necessary part of any expanding

business; and would borrow money to buy property he could not use, except to sell again at a profit: so Maria was always afraid of his business theories and held tight to her "nest egg."

About that time stock-companies were formed all over the United States for the purpose of building roads and canals, operating coal mines, and the general development of a great and new country; and Robert bought much stock in companies formed for the development of the resources of Illinois. His judgment was usually good, and he sold most of his stock at a good profit, or kept it for the expected dividends. His tailor shop always paid well too; so Robert usually had money in his pockets,—and when he did he spent it freely.

After they had been married a few months Robert bought a home on Fourth Street between Monroe and Adams. They had a 75 foot frontage on the south side of the alley, so that it was just like living on a corner. The lot was 180 feet deep, so they had ample room in the barn yard for their horses and chickens. The Evanses had always had a flower garden around their house in Tennessee; and it was not long before Robert and Maria had a flower and vegetable garden in the front part of their lot.

Maria loved flowers and knew just how to grow them; so everything she planted seemed to respond to her loving care; and, by Spring, she had cabbage roses, pink and white Moss Roses, Ragged Sailors, Tea Roses, and the thorny yellow and pink single roses, that were so popular at that time, all blooming in her garden. Honey-suckle and ivy had started growing over the fences, and sunflowers, Hollyhocks and coxcomb grew high in front of the barnyard fence. They had scattered flower seeds all over their front yard; and, that first spring, the plants grew and blossomed among the grass; so that every one who passed stopped to admire her garden. It was Maria, and a few others like her, who got the people of Springfield interested in beautifying their homes, so that the city became known as "the City of Flowers."

That fall Robert's father, who was always in debt, was about to lose his home through the foreclosure of a mortgage: so they had to buy the place and assume the mortgage, in order to save it. Because of her natural horror of debt, Maria was greatly worried: but they sold some other property, a short time later, and paid off the mortgage,—much to her relief. It was very fortunate that they were able to pay it off when they did, for 1836 was the year of the financial panic, when business in Illinois (and all over the nation for that matter) was at a standstill. There was practically no money in circulation, and building improvements of all kinds were stopped. Fortunately there were men who had money laid by, who still came to Robert to make their clothes; and, by living very carefully, he and Maria were able to save something each month (during those hard times) which Robert invested in land that was sold for delinquent taxes.

It was during this same year that Robert came home one evening and told her of a strange young man who had stopped to see him

about making a suit of clothes. He was very tall and awkward looking, and did not have the money to buy the kind of a suit he needed (for a suit for a large man had to be made of good material) and Robert would not let a second grade suit go out of his shop. The young man said that he was paying off a debt, of long standing, and could not buy a suit unless he could pay for it in service. On the other hand he was a lawyer and a member of the Legislature and should not go around looking like a back-woods farmer. Robert said that he had liked the awkward young man as soon as he had met him, for he seemed to be very honest and genuine, and as Robert sometimes needed a lawyer to draw up papers and give advice, they made an arrangement by which the young man could have the suit without being obligated to pay any money; and then he had said, "I hope you'll feel that you all have made a good bargain, and that I can be of real use to you; but you'll be disappointed if you are like the man I met the other day, who said that a good lawyer had to be like a restless man in bed; who would lie on one side and then turn over and lie on the other side. I am not that kind of a lawyer. I have to believe in my client, and the rightness of my case, before I can do anything." Robert said that he was in Springfield making arrangements to open an office, with a friend, some time in the near future, and he added: "When he comes back to have his suit fitted, I am going to invite him to have dinner with us. I think you will like him. He is rather rough and uncouth but he has high ideals and is a gentleman at heart." When Maria asked the young man's name, Robert said, "Oh yes, his name,—let me see,—I think it was Lincoln,—Abraham Lincoln; but he said that all of his friends called him "Abe."

CHAPTER XI

When Robert and Maria were married, he told her family that she could go home to visit them once each year, but it was not as easy to leave their home in Illinois and travel such a long distance, as he had thought it would be: and it was nearly three years before she returned to her old home to visit her people. Charles Biddle had brought one of Maria's brothers, and her sister Lucy Jane, with him, when he visited his parents near Springfield the year before:—but that had only made Maria more anxious to see her father and mother, and the rest of their large family. It had not been easy for her to adjust herself to live with, and among, the Biddles: for they were very different from the Evanses and their kinfolks with whom she had grown up.

Her people had all inherited, or acquired, the characteristics that made her grandfather, her father and her brothers, ideal inn-keepers for three generations. They were genial, sympathetic, intelligent and considerate of others. While they were all well informed and had very definite opinions on most subjects, they were also good listeners. They followed others, who led the conversation, with interest; and were ready with kindly and clever replies. They seemed to be always thinking of the comfort and happiness of those about them; instead of being self-centered and selfish.

The Biddles had more elegant manners, and were generally more gifted in the arts and social refinements of life. They were genial, quick witted and clever; but their wit often had a sharp edge, which left those they loved hurt and humiliated. One of their worst characteristics (from the standpoint of those who had to live with them) was their sensitiveness. They were very self-centered, and believed that their sensitiveness was the result of highly organized personalities that had developed through many generations of aristocratic ancestors; and rather prided themselves on their superiority, instead of realizing that they had only developed a morbid mental condition that might have been cured like any other disease.

Maria's first experience with this peculiarity of the Biddle family came one day soon after she was married, when Robert made some remark about one of her Illinois relatives, and Maria said, "Oh no, he is not like that!" Robert replied, "Do you mean to say that I do not tell the truth? You know that I don't say anything until I know what I am talking about." Maria answered, "I know, Robert, you are always very careful to tell the truth, but this time you are mistaken," and Robert replied, as he left the room, "I am never mistaken." That day he did not come home to dinner, and in the evening, when he came he did not say a word, but sat down by the fire to read a book. Maria got his supper ready, and asked him if he was not going to eat, but he replied that he did not feel well enough to eat. The next morning he went to work without his breakfast; and Maria was crying when her father-in-law came in to see her later in the day.

He understood the situation immediately, and said, "Now daughter, don't cry. If you do, Robert will have those spells oftener. He wants to show you how badly his feelings were hurt when you contradicted him. The only way for you to do is not to notice him when he has those spells. If he hasn't sense enough to eat, just let him get hungry. It won't hurt him. Indians often go for days without eating, and it seems to do them good. Polly (Mrs. Biddle) has always managed the whole family that way, and rather than have her 'sick' we all do anything she wants. She is too old to change now, but it would have been better for all of us if we had paid no attention to her, and then she would have learned better. You will have to learn to take Robert as he is. In most ways he is one of the finest men in the world, but he has this one fault, and can make you very unhappy unless you can just pretend not to notice it. I have an idea that, if the next time he has one of those spells, you can go out to see some friend, and leave him alone for a while, he will get over it quicker. Or, if you could manage to have a sick spell yourself, he would forget about himself in worrying over you; for he really loves you more than anything else in the world."

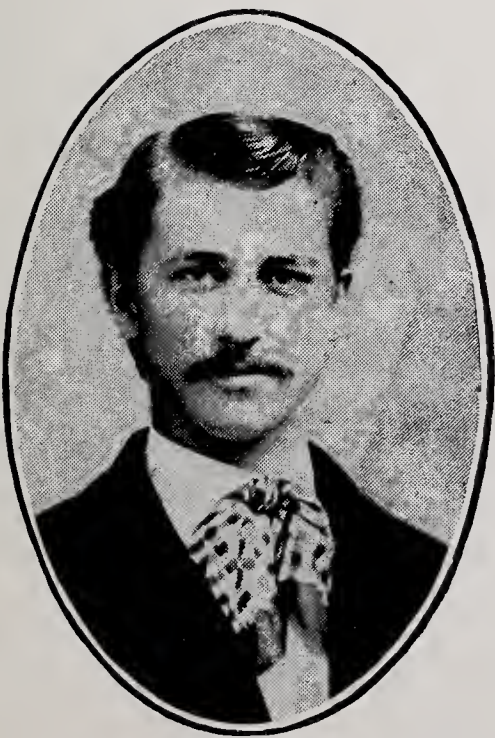
Maria was much too kind to hurt Robert in any way, even though it might help to break him of a bad habit, so she did not take her father-in-law's advice. She knew that Robert's greatest pride was his belief in his own honesty and integrity; and that that pride was the foundation on which he had built the structure of his own self-respect. Robert believed that he always spoke the truth, and from his point of view, he did; but Maria knew that no one can ever know the exact (or whole) truth; so she decided that, when she did not agree with what he said, she would simply keep quiet, and if he ever had spells of being "hurt" or losing his appetite, she would pretend not to notice, and would do nothing about it; which course of action came nearer to curing him than anything else could have done. However living among such "highly organized and sensitive" people had its drawbacks.

In the Fall of 1836, more than two years after her marriage, Maria was delighted to discover that a baby was coming to their home, and she suddenly had a great desire to go back to Tazewell where she could bask in the sunshine that radiated from her loving and understanding family. Then a letter came from Tennessee which brought the sad news of Aunt Mary's death. Maria was heart-broken, for she had wanted so much to see Aunt Mary again! She had always felt guilty about the way she had treated her beloved Aunt, when she had married and gone away without any word of explanation, and she knew that Aunt Mary, who had always been so kind to her, must have been deeply hurt.

She had written and tried to explain, but she knew that her explanation had been inadequate, and had failed to mend the breach between them. So she had always looked forward to going to Chucky, where she knew her doting Aunt would forgive her, when she realized how successful her marriage had been. * * * * Now it was



The Biddle home at Corvallis, Oregon
 B. R. BIDDLE, MARIA E. BIDDLE, EDWIN (EDDIE) W. BIDDLE
 and ALICE BIDDLE



EDWIN WEBER BIDDLE
 1870



MARIA EVANS BIDDLE
 At Eighty

too late, and she would never see Aunt Mary again, or ask her benediction. She had been so busy, and time had gone by so rapidly, she had not realized how long it had been since she had seen the folks at her old home. She thought that they too might be taken by death, and suddenly a strange fear seized her, and she could think of nothing but her people in Tennessee, and the necessity of seeing them as soon as possible,—while they were still there.

The trip could not, very well, be made before Spring, but Robert always tried to do everything he could for Maria's comfort and happiness, so when he noticed signs of home-sickness, he started, at once to arrange for the trip. As he could not be away from his business as long as Maria would like to stay, he arranged for her father to meet her at Louisville, Kentucky, and take her the rest of the way to Tazewell.

They started, in the spring wagon, early in May, and drove as far as Carlinville the first day, where they stayed over night with Robert's sister Harriett, who had married Hamilton Campbell a couple of years before, and who had a comfortable little home in the town that had been named for Maria's cousin, Thomas Carlin. Robert's father and mother, with Angeline, were staying at the Campbells; and Harriett had a baby girl of her own who cried all night,—so altogether, the house was much too crowded for any one to be comfortable. But the family would have been greatly hurt and disappointed if Robert and Maria had not stayed over night with them.

Mr. Biddle told Robert about a farm, between there and Springfield, that (on account of the financial depression) could be bought for less than half of its value, and which (if he could buy it) would support him comfortably for the rest of his life. Robert promised to look at the property on his return from Louisville.

Angeline was fast becoming a problem to her parents, who had never tried to manage her when she was small. Now they were getting old, and she had grown to be a beautiful headstrong girl of ten, with boundless energy and an unquestioning faith in her own judgment,—and they were helpless in coping with her dominating personality. Robert and Maria had had Angeline visit them many times in Springfield, and had not found her difficult to manage, so Maria invited her to go with her to Tazewell.

It took them several days to reach Louisville, but when, at last, they drove up to the inn where Maria was to meet her father, they saw him standing in the street, talking to a friend, while he waited their arrival. He went up to the wagon; and, as soon as they had stopped, he held up his arms to Maria to lift her from her high seat to the ground. As she fell into his arms she kissed him and held on to him while she started to cry. Then she saw her brother Henry standing beside them, waiting to be noticed. Maria was excited and talkative all during the dinner, at the Inn, that followed their reunion; and then, when they were ready to start, there were more tears when she had to bid Robert good-bye; and, looking back, saw him head his horses toward Springfield, and their home.

She sat between her father and Henry, as they drove along the old Kentucky road; and as her spirits rose she laughed and sang and asked questions about all the family at home. They stopped one night at Uncle John's, and again at Uncle Edward's old home, as they passed through Kentucky. Maria became more and more impatient as they neared Tazewell; for it seemed to her that horses never traveled so slowly before. Her father reminded her that they must not hurry the horses too much; for they had many miles of rough, steep road to travel before they reached Tennessee; and that horses, like people could not maintain top speed and hold out until the end of the journey.

At last they came to Cumberland Gap, and passed between the mountains into Tennessee:—and the grass seemed greener, the flowers more colorful and the hills more beautiful than they had ever been before. They soon reached Powell River and stopped at Uncle Preston Holt's for dinner, where they were surrounded by members of her mother's family. Maria had many cousins in Illinois, whom she knew and admired; but they did not seem like the cousins she had grown up with in Tennessee. These cousins seemed more akin, and brought to her the realization of how much they had always meant to her.

While they stopped for dinner Henry borrowed a horse and rode on to Tazewell to tell his mother that Maria would be there in time for supper. Then he went on to the inn to carry the news to Hamilton, and the rest of the family; so, that when Maria reached home, her mother and all of the Tazewell relatives were there to greet her.

It was a wonderful home coming! Even the slaves vied with each other in trying to please "Miss Maria": but the two persons who were most grateful to have her at home, where her mother and Old Black Liza, who cared for her, when she was a baby and had always called herself "Maria's old black Mammy."

Hamilton and Minerva rode over from the Inn; and Matilda, with Gray and little Henry, came to have supper with the family,—and Maria. The servants did everything they could to make the home-coming a happy event. The cook remembered the things that Maria liked best to eat; and had been planning, for days, just what to have for each meal, when "Miss Maria came home." That first evening they had wild roast turkey with dressing, baked ham with sweet potatoes, fresh made hominy fried with smoked side meat, hot corn cones, apple butter and pickles. There were also jelly and other relishes on the table, which made quite a feast for supper,—usually their scantiest meal.

Hamilton and Minerva left for home soon after the meal was over for the air was cold and they had ten miles to ride. Then Matilda said that it was Henry's bed time, and she and Gray left for their home, further up the hill. Then Mother Evans reminded the younger children that it was their bed time too; so they (with Angeline) went reluctantly up stairs. It was then that Maria realized, for the first time, that she was very tired; and, turning to her mother, she said: "Oh mother I wish that I could be a little girl once more,

and you could take me up stairs and put me to bed, like you did the night we heard the mountain lion, and I was afraid to be alone"; and Ruth replied: "Maria, honey, I know you must be mighty tired after bein' toted over those rough roads all the way from Springfield, and I aim to carry you up to bed right now"; and she led the way up to Maria's old room, that had been prepared for her home-coming. Old Eliza had been there before them and had the warming pan in the bed, and her bed gown warmed and folded under the covers where it would stay warm until she used it. Ruth sat down while old Liza helped Maria undress, combed out her long golden hair and braided it for the night,—then rubbed Maria's back with some soothing lotion and tucked the covers under the sides of the feather tick.

Old Liza was tidying up the room and her mother was still sitting in the chair by her bed when Maria dropped off into a dreamless sleep, from which she did not wake until late the next morning.

Maria loved her husband and wished that he could have been there with her; but he had promised to come later, and she was too busy and too happy to miss him very much, those first few days she was back with her family. She had never before realized how many relatives she had in Tennessee; for she had grown up with them and taken them for granted: but after being among strangers, for three years, she was almost overwhelmed by their kindness and attention.

Her grandfather, George Evans, with three brothers and two sisters, had followed some of their cousins into north-eastern Tennessee when that territory was still a part of North Carolina, and he often told his children, before he died, that they were kin to all of the Evanses in the state, at that time; but none of the children knew much about the relationship except that they were all "cousins." However those early Americans were very clannish, and a drop of common blood not only made them kin, but created a bond between them that was supposed to be stronger than friendship, and which entailed certain privileges and obligations on all of the clan.

Besides all of those distant cousins (most of whom were unknown to Maria's generation), George Evans, and his brothers and sisters, all had large families who, in the third generation, had grown into a multitude of closely related men, women and children of all ages. Maria's father, alone, had five brothers and four sisters who were all married and (with the exception of Aunt Mary) had large families.

In her father's family, (even though her older brothers and sisters were no longer living at home) there were never less than a dozen persons at the table for a meal; and usually there were many more. Sometimes there would be so many the table would have to be set twice, and then the children could all eat together, and have a good time without any grownups to watch their table-manners. At such times the children would be given pieces of bread and molasses before dinner to keep them from getting hungry before the grown-ups were through, and the table reset for them.

Angeline had never been with a large family before, and it required all of her energy and ingenuity to keep up with the others.

As she was a natural leader, she was always trying to improve their games, and methods of work, by introducing new ideas, which were not always successful. Such mistakes taught her that other people often knew more than she did. Since she was constantly employed here she was no longer a problem to anyone, and the Evans' family considered her a very interesting girl, and enjoyed having her with them.

She had intended to visit her brother, Charles Biddle, in Granger County, but begged to be allowed to stay with the Evanses; so they made a place for her in their home, and she started to school with Lucy Jane, and remained with them for the rest of the session.

Robert wrote often, and his letters were so loving, and so full of Springfield news, Maria looked forward to hearing from him every time mail came from Illinois. He told her that he had bought the farm his father had talked about, and had given his father a live interest in it; so that he and his mother would have a home of their own and feel more independent. He said that he had to borrow some money to buy the place, but hoped to sell other property soon, and pay the debt. He often spoke of his friend, Mr. Lincoln, who had opened his law office in Springfield; and came to spend the evening with him, occasionally, when they would have long talks about American politics and conditions in Illinois (and Springfield) in particular. Mr. Lincoln was a member of the State Legislature; and was one of the nine tall men (known as "the long nine," with an average height of over six feet) who were responsible for getting the State Capital moved to Springfield.

The Capital was to be moved as soon as the new capitol building was finished;—and that might indicate that property in and around Springfield would advance in value: so Robert was looking for good investments.

In his letters he also frequently mentioned John and Sarah Weber, who were among their best friends in Springfield. They had spent their childhood, and were married, near Robert's old home in Virginia, and (as they were all about the same age) they seemed to have much in common. John Weber had learned the trade of Cabinet Maker, in Virginia, and had opened a shop in Springfield, where he made all kinds of fine woodwork and furniture. Robert was invited to their home for supper, very often, while Maria was away, and nearly all of Robert's letters contained some message from Sarah Weber.

Mr. Nelson (Uncle Will) and Aunt Eliza, with their older children, came to visit the Evanses while Maria was there, but it did not seem right for them to come without Aunt Mary; who had always been like a second mother to Maria, and a favorite with the whole family. They all talked of her,—her beauty and character,—her generosity,—her kindness and thoughtfulness to all about her. She had been a true lady of the old school, radiating sunshine and sympathetic understanding to all about her. Even the slaves vied with each other in serving her, for they all loved her, and considered themselves socially

superior to other negroes because they belonged to the Conway family. They were superior too, for, in trying to live up to the ideals of "their family" (with whom most of them had lived for several generations), they had developed into the very best type of colored men and women.

As they talked of Aunt Mary, Maria said, "Aunt Mary was good to every one, and every one else appreciated her and was kind to her; but I, who received more from her than all the others, was a disappointment to her and made her unhappy. I wish she could have known how much I really loved her; but I could not have given Robert up to please any one. I know Robert's faults better than she could have known them, but I also know his good qualities. He is not likely to ever be a rich man (at least nor for long), but he is so resourceful I am sure that he will never be poor either. He is always trying something new, so he sometimes makes mistakes, but life with him will always be interesting, and never dull. How I wish I could have married him without hurting dear Aunt Mary!"

Aunt Eliza told her that Aunt Mary did not really blame her for marrying the man she loved. Then she told Maria about Aunt Mary's last sickness, which was not a sickness at all, for she had only complained of a misery in her knees and back, which they thought had been caused by the cold winter; and then she was sleepy most of the time, which they thought was caused by "Spring Fever"; so she took sulphur and molasses, and drank sassafras tea three times a day, and thought that she was getting along all right. Then one day she was dizzy, and thought that she would lie down for a little while; and when Uncle William went in to see how she was feeling, she did not answer him, and a few minutes later she was dead.

Uncle William never got over the shock. He did not seem to have any interest in life, after she had gone, except to free his slaves, and get his large estate in order, before he went to join her in heaven, for he was very sure that he had only a short time to live.

He worked feverishly to free his slaves, but according to the laws of Tennessee they could not be freed in that state. They did not want to leave the farm where they had always lived, and which they considered their home, so he planned to get a bill through the next Legislature, making it possible for him to give them their freedom; but he died before the Legislature met. However he left a will giving instructions about the freedom of his slaves, and leaving the income from his entire estate to be used for the support of his negroes until such time as they could be self-supporting.

As there were so many difficulties in the way of freeing the slaves in the Southern States, and as the negroes did not want to live among the Yankees, they (with stock and farming tools) were taken to Liberia, by an agent for the estate, who bought land for them and got them settled in their new home.

Robert came to Tazewell about the middle of May, prepared to stay in Tennessee until Maria was ready to go home. On May the 22nd, 1837, their first child was born at Tazewell. Robert and Maria

had been married three years and were over-joyed to be the parents of a fine sturdy boy. She named him for her two favorite brothers,—James who was four years younger, and Henry who was four years older than she. They were the two brothers who were nearest her age and, aside from Matilda, had been her closest companions when they had all been at home together. James Henry Biddle was a name that they all liked. It sounded simple and dignified, and they were sure that the little mite of humanity in the cradle, would be a credit to the name when he grew to be a man.

It was nearly a month before Robert thought that Maria and the baby should attempt the long ride back to Springfield; so, while he waited, he cut and fitted new suits for his father-in-law and his older brothers-in-law, and also for his own brother; for there were few tailors who could give men's clothes the look of distinction that Robert could by his cutting and fitting. In fact he could cut anything—even women's clothes—to look exactly like the fashion plates sent from Europe.

Angeline had found a very happy home with the Evans' family, and was doing good work in school. She was well behaved and gave Ruth and Elijah no trouble; so, as she was anxious to stay with them, Robert made arrangements for her to board with the family at Tazewell, and finish school.

Old black Liza was so delighted with "Mis Maria's baby" that she took nearly all of the care of it, and when Maria started to pack for her journey home, Eliza begged to go with her so that she could take care of little James Henry. Elijah told her that she could take Liza and keep her as long as she wanted to stay, for she had served them long and well, and he would like to send her to a state where she could have her freedom if she wanted it. So, one day in July, Robert and Maria (with old Liza and James Henry) started back to Springfield in their comfortable spring wagon, which was loaded with gifts from the relatives in Tennessee.

CHAPTER XII

The year 1838 was an important one in the lives of Robert and Maria Biddle, for many things happened in that year, that seemed of little consequence at the time, but which eventually changed the whole tenor of their lives.

Maria's second cousin, Thomas Carlin, was the incoming Governor of Illinois; and, by act of the Legislature, Springfield had become the Capital of the state: so the state papers and the money from the Treasury had to be moved from Vandalia (the old Capital) to Springfield, as soon as the vaults in the new Capitol building were finished.

The distance was about 120 miles by the county roads; and Robert, who was a tireless rider, a crack shot and lover of adventure, was delighted when he was asked to go with the party to Vandalia. Wishing to make the transfer as secret as possible, the Governor and the State Treasurer led the party on horseback. Behind them came the covered wagon, drawn by four horses and loaded with boxes and barrels;—while straggling along behind, rode the Sheriff and a few trusted relatives and friends.

They started before daylight, changing horses once on the way, and spent the night at Gov. Carlin's farm near Carrollton. After a good night's rest they continued their way (with fresh horses) before sun-up the next morning. Three more times, before they reached Vandalia, they stopped to change horses; so that, on their return, they could pick up fresh horses at regular intervals, and get over the road as rapidly as possible when they transported their valuable cargo.

When they reached the old capitol at Vandalia, the state papers and money were packed in boxes and barrels, which were loaded into the wagon after midnight: while the stocks, bonds and paper currency were carefully packed in the saddle-bags of the horsemen. Long before daylight they were on their way, while, in the sleeping town, none but their helpers knew that they had gone. The horses that they had left to be picked up on their return trip, were fresh and eager to go; so the cavalcade made good time and reached Gov. Carlin's farm late that night, well satisfied with themselves; but thoroughly exhausted from their long day's travel. They must have been too tired to think; for they rode up to the barn and threw their saddle-bags on the floor, unharnessed the horses, had them fed and bedded in the barn; and left the wagon, with its valuable contents, in the barnyard while they all went in to supper and to bed.

No one thought of having a guard to watch the State's wealth while they slept; and it is doubtful if any of them could have kept awake if they had been placed on guard duty. However a guard had not been necessary, for the next morning they found everything exactly as they had left it the night before; and they continued on to Springfield, where they delivered the State's precious papers,—and other assets, to the new Capitol; where they were put into locked vaults that had been built to receive them.

It had always been a source of humiliation to Mrs. Biddle, Sr., to have her favorite son earn his living as a tailor: and now, that the Governor was his wife's cousin, she begged him to sell his shop and engage in some other business that would be more in keeping with their social position. He was a good tailor and hesitated about giving up a prosperous business at that time, but he owned valuable real estate in and about Springfield and Carlinville, which required much of his time so he decided to sell his shop and devote his time to his investments. Bringing the State Capitol and the State Payroll to Springfield had increased property values, and the future looked very bright, notwithstanding the general financial depression.

Mr. Lincoln had become one of Robert's best friends, and came to their home for supper several times each month; and stayed far into the night, while they discussed the political problems of the day. He and Robert were each members of the new Whig Party, and while they had many of the Southerners' views about slaves and their treatment, they both believed that slavery, as an institution, was wrong. During one of their discussions, Lincoln said, 'If the slaves were to be freed tomorrow, few of them would be as well off as they are today; but there should be laws to protect the negroes from unjust and cruel masters. As a boy I always took slavery as a matter of course, and never thought much about it, until the time I went to New Orleans when I was about nineteen years old; and there I saw slaves put on the auction block and sold to the highest bidder. I saw one girl who was as white as I am, and pretty too,—sold to settle an estate. She was likely the daughter of the plantation owner, who had died. The family tried to bid her in, but she was too great a prize, and was bought by a terrible looking man from the East. I made up my mind right there that if I ever had a chance I would help to make laws that would protect the poor slaves from such abuses. Slavery is the greatest problem of our United States. In a free country (in a Democracy) there should be no slaves, but to give the slaves their freedom without preparing them for it, would bring about graver problems than slavery itself. The abuses that result from slavery are bound to cause continual conflict, in this country, until slavery itself is eventually abolished; and I hope and pray that the conflict will be one of words and legislation only.'

It was in the Fall of 1838 that Jason Lee, a Methodist missionary, who was returning from Oregon, stopped at Springfield and Carlinville, where he spoke to the people and told them of the great Oregon Territory, bordering on the Pacific Ocean; and of his Indian Mission in the Willamette Valley, south of the Columbia River.

Mr. Lee was a large, fine looking man about thirty-five years of age, with an unusual amount of personal magnetism, a pleasing voice and fanatical zeal for his missionary work. Soon after he was called to the Ministry, in 1832, he heard of the Indians of the Northwest who wanted to know about the white man's God, and the Great Book that told of the true religion. As soon as he heard of those Indians who were seeking the Christian Religion, he knew that they needed

him, and planned to go to them as soon as possible. However, it was not until April, 1834, that he reached Independence, on the Missouri frontier, and started on horseback, with his nephew Daniel, to cross the uncharted wilderness. That Fall he built a home and mission in the Willamette Valley. His mission prospered from the first, but more workers and money were so sorely needed he felt that he was called to leave his wife and assistant-superintendent in temporary charge while he went East to interest the proper people in the undertaking. At his meetings in Illinois he said that men with families were needed to colonize the wonderful North-West, and to develop its great natural resources. He was sure that they could teach the Indians better if colonists could develop a civilization that would be an example for the Indians to follow.

With all of the power of a natural orator and crusader, he appealed to the people to listen to the voice of God, which was calling for volunteers and for money to help in this great work. He had brought with him, from Oregon, three sons of Capt. McKay and his Indian wife, who were to be placed in an Eastern School. They sang Indian songs, and spoke briefly of their need of the white man's religion and culture. Robert and Maria heard Jason Lee when he spoke to a large gathering at Springfield; and when he went to Carlinville, Robert's sister, Harriett Campbell and her husband heard him address the crowd in front of the tavern where he stayed. He told them of his plan to charter a boat to take all of the missionaries, and colonists, who would go with him, when he returned to Oregon Territory. He said that while they needed teachers and doctors, they also needed carpenters, blacksmiths, farmers, and artisans of all kinds; for the families at the Methodist Mission, in that fertile valley of Oregon would be the pioneers of a permanent civilization. He painted such glowing word pictures of that Western Territory, as he talked, Harriett and Hamilton Campbell decided to go with him when his boat sailed from New York for Fort Vancouver and his Indian Mission.

It was impossible to listen to Jason Lee and not be moved by his appeal; but the family tried to dissuade Harriett and her husband from going so far away from their home, to an undeveloped country, where they would have to live among savage Indians. They all admired Brother Lee and his life of self-sacrifice,—his willingness to give all,—even the lives of his wife and infant son (who had both died a few months before at the Oregon Mission),—for the salvation of a savage people; but they knew of the hardships common to the lives of all pioneers,—and of the treachery of Indians who were sometimes considered friendly.

The Biddles and the Evanses, who had lived inland for several generations, thought of the ocean as a deep and mysteriously dangerous body of water; that served the useful purpose of separating America from the warring nations of Europe: but a twenty thousand mile ocean voyage was unthinkable to them,—especially when it meant that the voyagers would be lost to them forever, even if the

ship could carry them safely to their destination:—which did not seem possible.

However, the Biddles all had the blood of adventurers in their veins, and Harriett laughed at the fears of her family and friends, and said: "Why should we be more afraid than our ancestors who all crossed the ocean in smaller and frailer boats than we are going to have. And any way, God will watch over us as well at sea as on land. He will surely care for those who are dedicating their lives to His service." Such faith was an answer to all objections, and the Hamilton Campbells started to make their plans to join the Jason Lee party when it was ready to sail: but they had nearly a year to wait, and did not sail until late in the Summer of 1839.

Springfield was very gay the first year after it became the Capital of the State: and Robert, with his gracious manners; and Maria, with her wit and good humor, were general favorites where ever they went. Lovely Queen Victoria, of England, was considered the best dressed woman in Europe, at that time, and set the styles for America, as well as for Continental Europe. Maria, with her blond daintiness, was just the type to wear Victorian dresses of the prevailing style; so Robert cut the patterns and a seamstress made her a complete outfit, under his supervision;—and Robert thought she looked lovelier than the Queen herself. He was very proud of her as he preceded her into the church, and stopped in the aisle, by their pew, while she stepped in before him and seated herself, demurely unconscious of the admiring glances cast in her direction.

Late in the summer Maria had a letter from her sister Matilda, telling her the news from home. She said:—"Father does not seem as well as usual. It was a great shock for him when Aunt Mary and Uncle William died a couple of years ago: and then, last week, Aunt Roda and her husband died. Their deaths were so sudden we can hardly believe it yet: and father seems to be stunned; for you know how much he always thought of all of his sisters. Mr. Latham and Aunt Roda, and their two children, were always so happy together! Then one day he complained of not feeling well, and sat down in his chair, and dropped off to sleep. Aunt Roda went out to tell the cook something about dinner, and while she was out one of the servants noticed that there was something wrong with Uncle Latham and called Aunt Roda. When she came in she saw that he was dead, and gave one scream and slumped to the floor. They tried to revive her: but she too was gone; and so, they were both buried in one grave. Mr. Latham's family are going to take care of the children. Their funeral was one of the saddest things I have ever seen; but it may have been best; for neither of them had to grieve for the other." Maria would have liked to go home and help console her father, and visit for a little while with her parents; but it was impossible: for James Henry was only a year and a half old when Robert Evans, their second son, was born in Springfield on December 20th, 1838.

CHAPTER XIII

With the birth of their second son, Robert and Maria began to consider themselves middle-aged people, although she was only twenty-four and he was thirty years of age. In conforming to the custom of the time Maria had always worn a black lace cap over her hair, since her marriage, which added to her apparent age; although the black lace over her blond hair, and around her fair, rosy-cheeked face, was very becoming.

Robert had many worries which made him realize that age comes with the passing years: for he felt his responsibility for the support of his parents and his sister Angeline, as well as for his own family, which kept him constantly planning to meet his obligations:—for he was proud, and he wanted them all to have the best of everything. It was often discouraging for Maria too; for she was an excellent manager; and through thrift, they could easily have saved something each year to add to their capital: but Robert's father was forever getting into financial difficulties,—and his mother and Angeline were always needing something new,—which Robert supplied. Charles and Jack Biddle might have helped with the support of the family, if they had been asked; but Robert was so generous he always attended to their needs without mentioning it to any one; and other members of the family did not realize what he was doing. Maria admired him greatly for his kindness; but sometimes it was hard for her to do without things she wanted, just because others, they were caring for, were not as thrifty as she.

She often thought of what her father had told her before she was married, and she realized that he had told her the truth. She also knew that, from a material point of view, her father's advice had been good: but if it had been possible for her to have gone back and lived that part of her life over again, she would have married Robert just the same; for he came nearer to her ideal of what was best and finest, in a man and a gentleman, than any other man she had ever known. Another thing that made them seem older was that (since they had started to teach little James Henry to talk) they no longer called each other by their first names but were Ma and Pa to each other as well as to their little boy.

The next Spring Harriett and Hamilton Campbell were busy getting ready for their long trip to Oregon. They sold their home at Carlinville, and most of their furniture;—saving only such things as could be carried to New York in their wagon, for shipment. The last few weeks they spent with her father and mother on their Lick Creek farm: but Harriett spent some time with Robert and Maria while they helped her make new clothes for the trip.

It was late that summer when Harriett and Hamilton, with little Mary, started for New York in their covered wagon, which was loaded with household furniture, clothes, bedding, and a variety of other things to be used in their new home in Oregon. The family and

friends told them a sad good-bye; for no one ever expected to see the little Campbell family again, on this earth; but Harriett was smiling through her tears, as she waved them a last good-bye as the horses trotted down the road.

From New York, on October first, Harriett wrote: "We reached here about ten days before time for the *Lausanne* (our boat) to sail; but we have been entertained royally by the members of the Greene Street Methodist church. These good people are taking care of all of the Oregon Missionaries, from the time they reach New York until our boat leaves on October third.

Brother Lee had raised \$42,000.00 for the expenses of the expedition; and nothing has been overlooked to make the trip a success. As he wanted only married men, with their wives and families, to go with him on the voyage, he decided that he should not be an exception to the rule, and is to be married before we start, to a very fine woman—a school teacher—who will be a great help to him at the Mission.

Two of the McKay (Indian) boys are staying at a school in Massachusetts to be educated; but the third one is going back to Oregon with us. Dr. Richmond (a minister and physician), with his wife and four children, will be with our party. His little boy, whom they call Oregon, and our Mary, are to be baptized before we start.

The next letter you get from us will be from our new home in Oregon, unless we can send letters from the Sandwich Islands. I believe we are to stop there on the way: but this is our last good-bye until we have sailed twenty thousand miles, over two great oceans, and reached our future home. I am already hoping that you too will want to join us there, when a safe road is built and you can come overland without danger. May God watch over you,—as I am sure He will watch over all of us who have met here to follow His guiding hand to a new and unknown land. And I pray that we may all be true and faithful in following His Commandments; so that, if we meet no more on Earth, we may meet at last in Heaven, where parting is unknown." This letter did not sound like Harriett, for she had always been light-hearted and gay before she came under the influence of the Oregon Missionaries, through Jason Lee.

About this time Mary Todd, a very charming girl from Lexington, Kentucky, came to Springfield to live with her sister Elizabeth Edwards, whose husband was the son of former Governor Edwards, and belonged to one of the most influential families of Illinois. Mary Todd's family were also people of wealth and social position in Kentucky; and she was good-looking, highly educated and spoiled. She was a first cousin of Judge John T. Stuart, the law partner of Abraham Lincoln. It was quite natural that Judge Stuart should arrange for this peculiarly gifted partner to meet his brilliant young cousin: and it was also natural that this awkward, lonely man, who had had so few opportunities in life, should have been attracted to this vivacious, entertaining girl, who had had the best of everything in life as her

birthright. And she had been drawn to him, at once, by the mystery of his personality.

Mary Todd was only four years younger than Maria; and, as they were each better educated than most of the women of their time,—and were more interested in world affairs and politics;—it would have been quite natural for them to have been friends: but Maria was busy with her babies and her home,—and as they did not attend the same church, they seldom met except at some evening party, or an occasional afternoon tea. At such times Miss Todd's wilfulness and cutting sarcasm kept other young women from being as cordial as they might otherwise have been.

Mr. Lincoln seldom visited the Biddles, at their home, at this period; except, in his loneliness, after a temporary dismissal from the Edwards' home by the fickle woman of his heart. At such times he would seek companionship with his old friends: and would sit, by the hour, discussing politics and spinning yarns. He was a great mimic and always told a story well; so he was an interesting talker, and a welcome guest wherever conversation was enjoyed.

When the Biddles would not see him, for a length of time, they would know that Mary Todd had forgiven his imaginary offenses and had summoned him to her again; and that his courtship was progressing satisfactorily:—until her next out-burst of temper.

CHAPTER XIV

Maria was very proud of her two fine looking boys, and was anxious for her parents to see them; so, in the Spring of 1840, she prevailed upon Robert to take them (with old Liza) to Tennessee for a short visit.

Maria had always intended to give Liza her freedom; so that she could not be sold, in case anything should happen to her or Robert: but Liza had always wanted to go back to see her children in Tennessee; and she couldn't go back there as a free negro. Besides she did not want to be free as long as her folks (the Evanses) lived: for she had been born in that family and had always enjoyed the social distinction of being one of the "Evans' Niggers," who were all honest, industrious, God-fearing negroes; and were respected in the community in which they lived. When Maria spoke of giving her her freedom, she had said: "But honey, I belongs to you all; and if I didn't belong to you no mo' folks'll think I'm like some o'dem no 'count niggers in Springfield dat don't b'long to no body.": so Maria and Robert had neglected to give her her freedom; and now they could take her back to the old home where she could see her children and grandchildren once more.

The roads were better than when Maria first went over them, as a bride: but owing to the increase in travel, they were often worn into deep ruts, and were very rough in places. The horses needed rest occasionally, and it was the custom of the time to rein up and stop to talk to the people one passed. It was a friendly custom, and the travelers learned about the condition of the roads ahead, and also some of the local gossip of the sections through which they passed. It was through a message sent on, by one of the horsemen who passed them a day or two before they reached Tazewell, that the Evans family knew just when to expect them; and had prepared a family dinner in honor of their coming.

They found every one well. Laura and Lucy Jane were grown young women who were entertaining beaus. Sarah was now Mrs. Easley; and even Lafayette and William were getting to be big boys: but Angeline had grown more than any of the others, and looked very little like the eleven year old girl they had left there two years before. In fact she had grown to be a very beautiful young woman. She was now thirteen and seemed to have her full growth,—tall, slender and graceful. She was the one child, in the Biddle family, with blond hair; and her skin was so lovely in texture and coloring, she had been nicknamed "the Prairie Rose." She had often spoken of the prairies of Illinois, when she told about her parents and their home: and "The Prairie Rose" was a good name for her; for while she was delicately beautiful, she refused to be held down by the fetters of conventionality; and there were the thorns of wilfulness, restlessness and stubbornness, that kept people from coming near enough to give her the love and tenderness she longed for.

The Evanses, themselves had never had any trouble with her, for they had taken her into their home as one of their own family, and had always kept her busy. Their own children were taught that no one should ever be idle;—that only shiftless people were idle,—and Angeline was given the same kind of training; so she always had knitting, or mending, weaving, sewing, or some other kind of hand work to do, that kept her busy most of the time.

However, Hendel Atkinson, who was related to the Evans family by marriage, had begun to pay her marked attention. He was a widower with children older than she: but he was good-looking, played the "fiddle," sang well, and had a way with women. The Evanses considered him a very undesirable companion for Angeline, and they told her that she must not see him any more: but they suspected that she still met him at his sister's (Aunt Susanna Evans') home: so it was decided that Robert and Maria should take her home when they returned to Illinois. However she learned of their intention and, one morning, shortly before the time set for them to leave, Angeline said that she was going over to see Aunt Matilda: but, instead of going there, she met her lover and rode, with him, over to Kentucky; where they were married before any one had a chance to interfere. That afternoon they found a letter that Angeline had left, telling of their plans; and adding that they were going, on their honey-moon-trip, to visit her parents; and would be in Springfield by the time Robert and Maria reached home.

Robert was very angry and said that he would never receive Hendel Atkinson in his home,—and added that any man of his age who would take advantage of a romantic child, thirteen years old, and lure her away to marry her, against the wishes of her whole family, did not deserve any consideration. People of that time believed that if a girl made an unfortunate marriage there was nothing any one could do for her: for marriage was final and there was no escape. An annulment or divorce was a disgrace that no woman could ever live down.

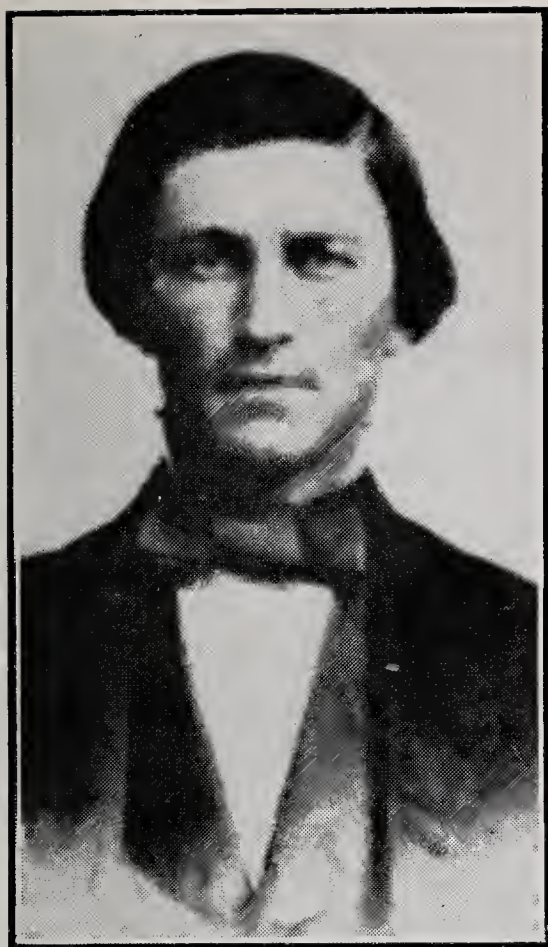
Maria was the only one who had any sympathy for Angeline, and she said nothing at the time: but she thought that she could understand the proud girl who had no real home, and lived from the bounty of her relatives and friends. Her pride and independence had kept her aloof from those who would have loved her most; and her waywardness had driven her from her own family: so she must have felt very much alone in the world, and was naturally susceptible to the guiles of a practiced love-maker like Mr. Atkinson. He was a man of great wealth and her loneliness, her youth and her innocence were all his allies. Maria could find no resentment, in her heart, toward poor Angeline; but only a great pity, and a desire to help her if the time ever came when she would be needed.

Old Black Liza was sick when Robert and Maria were ready to start home; and she was so anxious to go with them, they waited several days until she was able to go. Poor old Liza was sure that

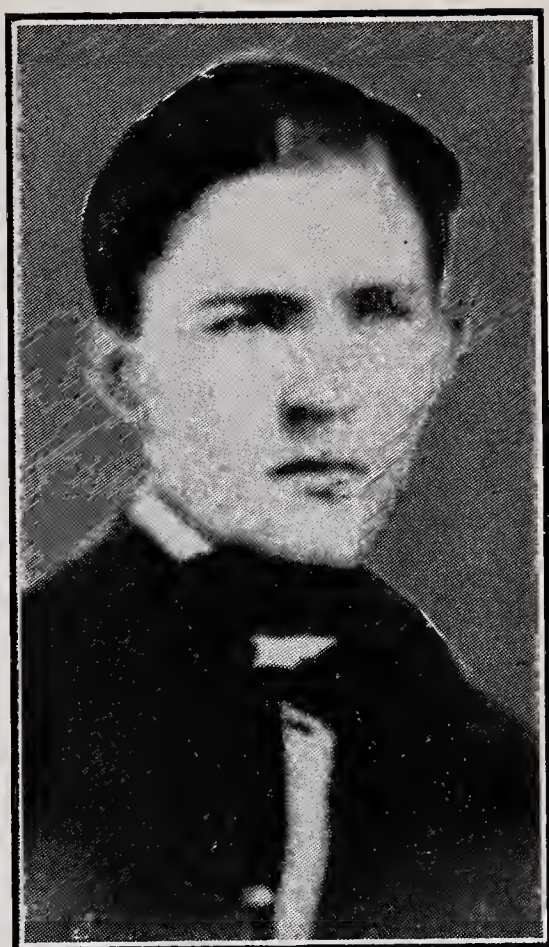
"Miss Maria" could not get along without her to look after the little boys, on the long tedious trip back to Illinois. It would have broken her heart if she had not been able to serve her beloved mistress; but she was getting old and crippled with rheumatism; so that she could no longer do any heavy work. She loved the boys and took excellent care of them, while she knitted and did the family mending. Sometimes she could do some of the cooking, when the children did not need her undivided attention.

She was reliable and efficient, except for her infirmities; and Maria would have found it difficult to manage without her,—at that time: for it was that Fall that Ellinorah Ruth, Maria's first daughter, was born. Maria was very happy; for, although she was devoted to her boys, she had always yearned for a little daughter; and this child was the most beautiful baby she had ever seen. She was not red like the boys had been, and her features were strangely perfect for such a tiny baby. Mrs. Brown, who was looking after the housekeeping for Maria, at that time, would take Ellinorah in her arms and say: "Miss Biddle, I hates to tell you, but you won't never raise this here child; for when the Lord makes as bonny a babe as her, he only lets it stay in this sinful world a little while; and then takes it to be an angel in Heaven. I've seen it happen afore, and I knows you won't never raise this here child. The Lord sure made her for His self; and He won't let her stay here long." But Ellinorah thrived and grew strong and robust; and was the picture of health.

It was about this time that the family received their first letter from Harriett, written after her arrival in Oregon Territory. Harriett and her husband had sent short letters from Rio de Janeiro and the Sandwich Islands, to let the family know that they were alive and well: but it was not until after they had reached Oregon, that she wrote a detailed account of the trip. The letter was very interesting, so the family passed it around; and it was read and discussed by them and their immediate friends, as well as by the Methodist Ladies' Missionary Society, and the Presbyterian Missionary Society,—while parts of it were copied in the local papers. The letter said, in part: "I wrote to you about the Farewell Meeting for the Oregon Missionary Family, held at the Green Street Methodist Church in New York, just before we left the States. I wish I had time to tell you more about it; for Brother Lee said that it was the most impressive Missionary service ever held in America. However we were not able to sail until six days later. It was nine o'clock, on the morning of October 9th, that we said our last good-byes to those on shore, and were carried out into the stream on the tug Hercules. While we were still on the tug, our little Mary and Oregon Richmond were baptized. Then, after again dedicating our lives to the service of God, we climbed up the ladder, at the side of the Lausanne and the tug towed us out toward the Atlantic Ocean. When the sails began to take the breeze, the Hercules was cut loose from our ship; and after circling us once,



JAMES HENRY BIDDLE
1837-1858



ROBERT EVANS BIDDLE
1838-1859



SARAH EMMA BIDDLE SPENCER
1842-1868



ALICE BIDDLE MORELAND
1854-1918

started back to New York; and our last tie with our home land was broken.

As we moved slowly on our course we waved to our departing friends on the tug, and sang our last hymn, which floated out over the waters of the Sound. As we sang we waved our hats and handkerchiefs and American flags, as long as the *Hercules* could be seen even as a dot in the distance,—and until it disappeared from view.

None of us regretted the step we had taken; but all of our eyes were filled with tears, as we realized that we could no longer go back even if we wished to; and that we might never again see the dear ones we were leaving at home, until life was over and we could meet in eternity. As we left the harbor, the bell rang for dinner; but very few of us were able to eat more than a few mouthfuls of food; for the peculiar motion of the boat, as it rode the waves, made most of the “family” sick, and we were not able to be up and about for several days. Most of the children, including Mary, were not sea-sick at all; and were running all over the ship and having a good time, with few, besides the Captain and crew, to look after them. I would have been worried about Mary under ordinary circumstances; but sea-sickness is unlike any other sickness I ever heard of. People are so sick they do not even care to live and they do not care about anything as long as the sickness lasts. Most of us were able to be up and walk about, in a few days: and from that time on the trip was a wonderful experience. We were no longer afraid of the water. We knew that the boat would be our only home for months to come, and that God, with His infinite love and protection, was with us at all times, whether we were at sea or on land, and faith knows no fear. While on the boat we had services three times each day,—at sunrise, at noon, and at night: and we also had Bible classes, where we studied the word of God, and the Missionaries discussed methods of teaching the Indians when we reached Oregon.

After we left New York we were out in the open sea for sixty-five days before we reached Rio de Janeiro; and as we sailed up the harbor, toward the city, the scene before us was the most beautiful I had ever seen. There was an American ship in the harbor, and the officers came, with their boats to take us back and forth between the Lausanna and the city.

We were the only ladies who went on the streets of Rio de Janeiro unveiled, and some of the people seemed to think we were very queer. We could not understand what they said, but every one treated us with great respect and we were invited to visit the palace where we met Don Pedro, the Emperor of Brazil, who seemed greatly interested in our expedition. Brother Lee spent some time with the Emperor, and they made some kind of a trade agreement which will open the way for an exchange of commodities between the people of Oregon Territory and the Brazilian Empire.

Even now there are ships sailing around South America, and Brother Lee thinks that our Missionary Family group is the forerunner

of a great immigration of Americans, who will soon be coming to Oregon to make their homes; for this is truly a wonderful part of the world. When this territory is more thickly settled, and the boats come more frequently, we will be very glad to exchange products with Brazil.

Our stay at Rio de Janeiro was so pleasant we found it hard to say farewell to the beautiful city, and the friends we had made in the short time we had been there: but we were all anxious to get to our destination, and knew that we must not stop long at any port on the way: so, on December 20th, we pulled anchor and sailed for Cape Horn and Valparaiso.

A few days out from Rio de Janeiro we were met by heavy head winds that blew for more than a month; and not only prevented us from making headway, but blew us some distance out of our course,—south and east of Cape Horn; so that it was two months before we reached Valparaiso:—and then only to find that an epidemic of smallpox was raging in the city. We were afraid to go ashore but we laid by in the harbor for two weeks, hoping to get a supply of fresh water, and other things we needed if we could secure them without danger of contagion. We finally sailed for the Sandwich Islands, by way of Juan Fernandez, where we took on the much needed supplies.

The Pacific Ocean was much calmer than the Atlantic had been, and we soon struck the trade winds that gave us fair sailing until we reached Honolulu on April 11th, 1840. We disembarked at once, and were entertained royally during our entire stay of seventeen days on the Islands. While we were there Brother Lee held a conference with King Kamehameha III in regard to the exchange of products between the Sandwich Islands and Oregon Territory; and an informal treaty was signed.

The Christian Missionaries, from New England, had not only introduced Christianity and an educational system in the Sandwich Islands; but they had helped the natives to form and maintain a better government than they had had before; so the King felt very kindly toward all Protestant Missionaries, and showed us every possible consideration while we were there.

After living on the boat for such a long time, our month's trip from the Islands to the Columbia River seemed very short and uneventful: but there was great excitement on board when the Oregon Coast was first sighted. The Captain had been looking through his glasses and told us that the narrow strip of blue, that we could barely see on the horizon, was the shore of our future homeland. As we watched, it gradually grew darker and greener and more distinct, until we could plainly see the tree-covered hills and snow-capped mountains, that soon seemed to encompass us as we were towed up the Columbia River to Fort Vancouver.

We had spent a happy eight months, on the boat together, since leaving New York. Besides our religious services, our Bible School

and other classes to prepare the missionaries for their work when they reached Oregon, we also played games and had special services and ceremonies for special occasions, like Christmas, New Years, Easter, or the birthdays of the different members of our "family": but most unusual (and to me the most interesting of all) ceremonies were those that took place during the burial and resurrection of the North Star. As we crossed the equator, going south on the Atlantic, the North Star seemed to set on the northern horizon: and the men removed their hats and stood with bare heads while a burial service was read and sacred songs were sung as the star seemed to sink into the sea. When it was buried from our view, in the ocean, we said farewell to our guiding star,—until the resurrection day, on the other side of the world. When we again crossed the equator, going north on the Pacific Ocean, we waited at the rail of the boat for the first glimpse of our star, on the northern horizon; and as it seemed to rise slowly from its grave in the sea, in our imagination it was almost like the resurrection of a human soul, and we sang songs of thanksgiving and praise, and had a service suitable for the occasion.

I wish you could see this place where the mission is built! Oregon Territory seems like Paradise to us after our long ocean trip. We are surrounded by the most beautiful trees we have ever seen, with ferns and wild flowers and birds all about us. The woods are alive with all kinds of game and the rivers teem with fish. There are many fish with reddish-yellow meat, called salmon, which are very different from any fish we had at home, and they are most delicious. They tell us that, a little later, we will have an abundance of wild berries. I can not begin to tell you of all of the wonders of this great country, in one letter; but I hope that the overland roads will be finished before many years, and that you too will decide to come out here to live.

Hamilton is very busy building houses and furniture for the members of our mission family: and he is also teaching the Indians to help him;—and to learn to build houses for themselves—but as yet they seem to like their own primitive wigwams or dug-outs better. Mary is very happy and has a number of playmates among the missionary children;—and some of the mission Indians also have children about her age. The Indian children play some games that are very much like "prisoner's base" and other games we used to play in Tennessee. We teach them our games and they teach our children theirs. Mary is learning their Jargon rapidly and can already make herself understood when she is with them. Please write often and tell me all of the home news. All of your letters may not reach us, but I think we will get most of them; and we will write whenever we have a chance to send a letter Eastward.

With much love to you all from

Your affectionate sister,

Harriett.

CHAPTER XV

There was a great religious revival in Springfield in the latter part of 1840 and the beginning of 1841.

The followers of William Miller, called Second Adventists or Millerites, were very active. They talked of the second coming of Christ; and predicted that the end of the world was at hand. Mr. Miller had even calculated (from references found in the Bible) that the destruction of the world would take place in the latter part of the year 1843; and he urged all of the people to repent of their sins and be saved before the wicked were utterly destroyed: for the beginning of the millennium was at hand.

Mrs. Brown, who helped Maria with her housekeeping, was a Millerite and talked constantly about becoming sanctified; so that she could ascend into heaven, on the last day, and join the saints in glory without having to meet death and the last judgment.

Maria had been a member of the Methodist church in Tennessee; but had never united with the Springfield congregation, although she and Robert attended both the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, and contributed something to the support of each. It was not until Rev. Albert Hale was called to the second Presbyterian Church of Springfield that they began to feel a special interest in that church. Rev. Hale was quite different from the average minister of his time, and made friends among the people of the town regardless of their religious affiliations. He also introduced the bass viola and the flute as instrumental aids to the singing of sacred songs: which was quite an innovation and was considered revolutionary by most of the older church members; who said that the use of musical instruments, in a place of worship, was not only inappropriate but was sacrilegious as well. However, others liked the music, and many came to add their voices to the sacred songs and to listen to the sermons.

Robert and Maria were among those who liked the music, and began attending the church regularly. On the first of January, 1841, Rev. Hale invited a friend to come to Springfield to help him conduct a revival service. As they were both men of high moral character and personal magnetism,—as well as being fluent and convincing speakers, the meetings were popular from the beginning. People attended in such numbers, the seats were all filled long before time for the meetings to open: and the late comers filled the aisles and stood in the back of the building. There had never been such interest shown in church meetings, in Springfield, before: and Religion became the subject of conversation on the street, in the stores and in the homes of the people.

Robert and Maria bought a new brass lantern, which they carried each night, to light their path, as they walked to and from the meetings (sometimes through mud and slush and snow), during the whole of January.

Before the meetings had concluded, one-hundred-and-twenty-one new members joined the Second Presbyterian Church alone;—while other new converts united with the First Presbyterian, the Methodist and the Baptist Churches. Robert and Maria were among those who became members of Rev. Hale's congregation: for Robert was a great admirer of the minister; and Maria believed that religious unity (especially when there were children in the home) was more important than any denominational preference she may have had: so she too became a member of the Second Presbyterian Church, at the close of the Revival Meetings.

They were not people who did anything half way; and after they joined the Church they became very active in the different branches of the organization's work. Robert helped with the music, and led an adult class in the Sunday School; while Maria belonged to the Missionary Society, and contributed food for the church suppers and socials. The Biddles had a large home and were always ready and willing to entertain visiting ministers, or other out-of-town church officials who came to Springfield.

On the 29th of November, 1841, Maria learned that the church people were planning a birthday surprise party for her that evening: so she decided to wash out some linen she might want to use when they came. Little Ellinorah was sitting in her high chair and the boys were playing on the floor with their blocks, when Maria went to the yard to hang out her washing. Suddenly she heard a noise, like something heavy falling to the floor; and when one of the boys screamed she dropped the clothes and ran into the house;—to find little Ellinorah lying quietly on the floor, with blood oozing from a small, ragged cut on her head.

James Henry was trying to lift her up, while his brother Robert was crying softly and saying: "Ella no get up. Ella fall down, go sleep." She was unconscious, but breathing; and Maria gathered her in her arms and ran, as fast as she could, to the doctor's office several blocks away. The child had evidently tried to get out of her high chair and tipped it over; and, as the chair fell her head hit against the sharp corner of one of the children's blocks. The doctor examined her carefully, and said that there was nothing he could do but to keep her quiet: so they took her home and laid her carefully in her little bed; but she never regained consciousness and, as Robert and Maria sat beside her bed, her pulse gradually became weaker. Once she opened her eyes and their heart beats quickened with hope; but their hopes were short-lived; and an hour later her grief stricken parents were alone in the room with Death. For many years, after that, Maria's birthday was no longer a day for congratulations and good cheer; for it had become the anniversary of the loss of their most precious possession.

The baby's death was a great blow to Robert and Maria, for they had almost worshiped her. She was so lovely and so lovable! She had been walking all over the house,—and talking a little too. When Maria would say to her: "Listen Ella, Pa is coming", she

would run into the hall; and as Robert opened the door, she would cry: "Pa! Pa! Ella ride horse!" and he would stoop down and take her in his arms, while he went skipping across the room, and calling to the others: "Oh Ma! Henry! Robert! Look at Ella ride a galloping horse". Only that morning she had laughed aloud and hugged him tight, as she rode the galloping horse:—and ten hours later, kind neighbors came to assist in the preparation for her burial. To Robert and Maria, it seemed that the light had gone out of their lives; as they clung together, in their grief, and found relief in tears. Then Maria felt some one tug at her skirt and, glancing down, saw two sturdy little boys standing hand in hand, looking at them with solemn, tear filled eyes. The older one said: "Please don't cry Ma. Ella's gone to heaven to be an angel; and God left me and Robert here to stay with you and Pa.": and the stricken parents dried their tears, and gave thanks to God, for the wonderful boys He had given them.

Mrs. Brown tried to console them by telling them that she had always known that the Lord made Ellinorah for an Angel; and had only loaned her to them, for a little while, until He needed her in Heaven: but Mrs. Brown, and her ideas, were of little comfort to Maria, who believed that her carelessness, in leaving her darling tied in her high-chair, while she left the room, was responsible for the accident; and she could not forgive herself. Even the minister brought her little consolation when he pointed out that life and death were predestined and foreordained from the beginning of time; and that she had only been an instrument, in the hands of God, when she left Ellinorah where she could fall to the floor;—and that her little girl had gone to Heaven where she would be a beautiful child forever; and would be waiting there to welcome them when their days on Earth were over.

Sarah Weber was her most sympathetic and understanding friend, and did all that she could to lighten the burden of Maria's grief; but it was not until tragedy came into the Weber home, that Maria could forget her own suffering in compassion for her friend's misfortune.

John Weber had his hand cut off by a buzz-saw, when he was making some furniture; and Maria went over to the Weber's to help his wife care for him. Aside from the injury, and the shock of losing his left hand, the Webers were thoroughly discouraged. He could no longer expect to support his family by the trade, in which he had been so successful; and he would have to start all over again, and find a way to earn a living with only one hand. Fortunately he still had his right hand, a good education, and the good-will of the whole community. He was also known to be an expert penman in a day when good penmen were rare.

So gradually Maria overcame her grief, in work for others, but she was never quite the same again. She had grown older, more thoughtful, more mature and more helpful to others who were suffering or in trouble.

CHAPTER XVI

Maria devoted more time to church work; but she was not well. She had no appetite; and at night, she would lie in bed, hour after hour, with her nerves tense and her eyes open until dawn,—when she would fall asleep and doze fitfully until the bright sunlight, and the striking clock, would tell her that it was time to start another day.

Dr. Henry told Robert that she needed a complete change of scene; and suggested that (as her parents had been urging her to bring the boys to visit them) he send Maria, and the boys, to Tazewell as soon as possible.

The roads were still very bad, in early February, so Robert decided to send them by boat,—which would be a complete change for Maria and an interesting experience for the boys. They boarded one of the large Mississippi River boats, at Alton; and then changed at Cairo to a smaller boat, which took them, up the Ohio, to the mouth of the Tennessee River,—and on to Knoxville, where they were to be met by one of Maria's brothers. There were many friendly people, on the boats, who became acquainted with Maria through their interest in her handsome, well-behaved boys; and they made her trip a pleasant one; so that she was almost happy again. When, at last, she reached her old home, with her family all about her, her mother took her in her arms, and tears of happiness rolled down Maria's cheeks,—with the consciousness of the steadfast love and understanding that lives in the heart of one's own family.

As the days passed, with them all about her, she forgot herself and entered whole-heartedly into the family activities. Her boys were petted and humored so much, she was afraid they would be badly spoiled:—but they had been exceptionally well trained and humoring them did not seem to effect them at all.

Hamilton, with his wife and family, were there nearly every day; while Matilda, with her husband and Henry, (who lived only a short walk up the hill), were there much of the time. Sarah, who was then Mrs. Easley, came often, with her husband and baby. Laura had grown to be a lovely young woman, and had married William Kirkpatrick (said to be the second son of an Earl, who had fled from Scotland to America, for political reasons) a few months before: and pretty little Lucy Jane was engaged to be married to William Epps, a successful tailor of Tazewell; and, strange to say, the family were not making any objection to his trade, as they had to Robert's when he wanted to marry Maria. Even Lafayette was almost a grown young man at sixteen; and William was a big boy of eleven and very much in evidence at all the family gatherings.

Elijah and Ruth were very happy to have their family all at home once more; and as they sat in their chairs, on either side of the fireplace, laughing at the young peoples jokes and banter, they

were pictures of the contentment and happiness that middle age brings to those who have lived wisely and well. They had plenty of this world's goods for all of their needs: they had many loyal slaves who served them well,—and took pride in their service: and they had a family of highly respected sons and daughters: and so their hearts were filled with happiness and thanksgiving.

A few days later their old home, across the road from the Inn, suddenly burst into flames. There was no one in the house, at the time, and Elijah rushed into the burning building to save a box, in which he kept several thousand dollars of paper currency. As he entered the burning building a falling timber hit him; and he fell unconscious in the door-way. He was carried across the road to the Inn and put to bed, while some one rode to Tazewell for one of his brothers-in-law (Preston Holt or Thomas Walker) who were both physicians. They both came and did everything possible to save Elijah's life: but their efforts were without success; and the Evans' happy home was turned into a house of mourning.

Elijah's death was so sudden and unexpected, Ruth was stunned by the shock; and sat,—thinking and talking of nothing but him and their lives together. Day after day, she told about Elijah when they played together, as children; and of the time they married and came to Clinch River to live. As she talked on and on,—he was always her hero, who was kinder and better and more clever than any one else. There had never been a time when he had not been her ideal:—and now he was gone,—and life could never be the same for her again. But she was a woman of strong will; and determined to pull herself together and carry on as he would have wished her to.

She was a woman of unusual business ability too; but women, of that time, had little legal recognition; and it was necessary for some male member of the family to act as legal guardian for each minor child.

Elijah had always had excellent health, and had expected to live many more years; so he had made no provision for the distribution of his large estate. He had partnerships in various business ventures with his older sons, which he had, undoubtedly, intended to turn over to them before his death; but, which now became a part of the estate and had to be probated. Matilda's husband, Gray Garratt, attended to legal matters connected with the settlement of the estate; while William Houston (who had been a trusted friend of the Evans' family for many years) and Hamilton Evans were appointed Executors. An income was set aside for Ruth's immediate use,—until her dower rights could be established. There were ten children in the family, two of whom were minors; and, in order to make a just distribution of the estate, it was found necessary to sell all personal property,—including the slaves—at auction, to the highest bidder. Elijah had wanted his slaves freed; but there had been no legal way of freeing them in Tennessee; so, at his death, they became a part of his estate with a cash value.

Most of the older negroes had belonged to Grandfather George Evans; and their children, and grandchildren, had remained in the family; so the heirs of Elijah Evans felt under moral obligation to keep them,—in order to prevent their families from being separated or mistreated. As the paper currency Elijah had saved for emergencies had been destroyed, in the fire, the family did not have enough cash to bid them in: so the heirs had to borrow money for that purpose. This left them in debt for many years. In fact some of them were never able to pay off the debt they incurred at that time: but they managed to keep all of the slaves. None of them were sold to outsiders, and the negro families were kept together.

Maria did not wish to take any of the slaves to Illinois; so she was given land and currency instead. Her father had had a large amount of silver coin on hand, which was divided among his daughters, to be made into flat silver for their tables. Maria took her's to Springfield, and had it made up by a silversmith, who engraved the initials B.&M.B., for Benjamin and Maria Biddle. She was always very proud of her silver, and told her children that it had been made from silver coin that had belonged to their grandfather,—and that they must always take care of it, so that it would last as long as they lived.

When Robert took Maria home, after her father's death, she found that the rooms of their house had been repapered and repainted; and that the furniture had been changed about; so that there was little left to remind her of the past,—and of the little girl who was with them no more.

They had been home only a short time when Robert received a letter from Angeline, saying that she would like to bring her baby to visit her family,—if some one could meet her at Louisville, Kentucky. Her husband could bring her that far about the first of the next month, and she was anxious to see her father and mother,—and wanted them to see her little boy. Angelina was then only fifteen, even though she was the mother of a child more than a year old; and her letter sounded as though she were very homesick for her family in Illinois: so Robert arranged to meet her in Louisville, and bring her home.

She was more beautiful than ever, and had a fine boy, who was as spoiled as he was handsome. Several days after she reached Springfield, she and Maria were sitting on the porch knitting, while they watched the boys playing near by; when Angeline leaned toward her sister-in-law and said: "I want to stay with you and Robert always! You won't send me away, will you? I can't ever go back to Hendel Atkinson. Robert was right. I should never have married him; and I'm never going back to live with him again." In 1842 respectable women did not leave their husbands: and Maria could not believe that she had heard correctly;—so she said: "Does Hendel know that you're not goin' back to him?"; and Angeline replied: "No, I didn't dare tell him. He wouldn't have let me bring the baby." "But" said Maria, "he toted you all the way to Louisville, so as you could come home to see your folks. Not many men would have gone to all that trouble just to please their wives. He must be a likely husband, even if he is cross

sometimes." And Angeline replied: "Oh Maria, you can't understand, 'cause you've never known a man like him! He was good to me when we were first married; but before the baby came,—when I was sick, he began to get tired of me:—and then he took me on that long stage ride that jolted me up so the baby was born, in a strange hotel, two months before he should have been. Two strange women wrapped him in cotton and put him in a pan, in front of the oven;—and then they worked the rest of the night over me. Every one thought that we would both die. I had been so headstrong, about getting married, I thought I'd never be able to tell my folks how he treated me: but I can't stand him any more; so I made up my mind to come home and stay. Maybe I'm not very easy to get along with; but I know he's tired of me, and was glad to get rid of me for awhile:—so he brought me to Louisville. Henry Clay wanted him to come to Lexington, anyway; so it wasn't much trouble for him to bring me to Louisville. Henry Clay is planning to run for President; and Hendel always helps him with his political campaigns. The night before I left, I had a long talk with his sister (who has been a real sister to me), and gave her my locket to remember me by; when I told her that I was never coming back. She kissed me and we cried together; but she said she didn't blame me; and she knew my little boy would be better off with my family than with his father. So here I am, and I hope that Robert will be willing for me to stay." Maria told her that she thought they could make a place for her and her little boy, in their home, and that she would talk to Robert about it."

When Robert heard about Angeline's trouble, he not only offered her a home; but he wrote a letter to Hendel Atkinson, telling him in plain English just what he thought of him.

CHAPTER XVII

None of the family, except Angeline, ever saw Hendel Atkinson again; but, a number of years later (after the Mexican War), Angeline went back to Tennessee and nursed him during his last illness.

Angeline, and little Henry, added two persons to the Biddle family, which brought about new complications and new problems for Maria to solve. Angeline tried, in every way, to make herself useful; but the addition of two undisciplined persons into the most ideal environment is certain to cause more or less conflict and confusion. The Biddles were all high-strung, nervous people, who were sensitive to any disturbing influence and were not easy to live with. Maria, on the other hand, was one of those understanding persons who never quarreled, or found fault, with any one: and, being fond of Angeline, she smoothed out any differences that occurred; and they all got along remarkably well. Nevertheless there was an undercurrent of friction regarding little Henry. Robert was a very strict disciplinarian; and his children had been taught to obey the moment they were spoken to; while Angeline's little boy had never learned the meaning of obedience.

Robert was very kind to the children; and was always planning ways to instruct, or amuse them. When he had time, he would spend hours teaching and entertaining them. He always bought the best of everything for them too; for he believed that his family was better than the common folks about them;—and that there was nothing too good for his wife and children. He also believed that, as head of the family, it was his duty to provide for them and give them his first consideration; but it was also their duty to obey him unquestioningly. When he expressed a desire it was a polite command and must be obeyed at once. Angeline too, expected her wishes to have prompt consideration; so it would have been almost impossible for any one, except a natural diplomat, like Maria, to have maintained a happy home with two such people in it.

Mother Biddle came often to visit them, for a day or two at a time; and when she was there every one had to be on his best behavior; for she was quite sure that the world was going to the dogs,—and the younger generation was leading the way. She said that any one could see that the young people, of that day, were bold and ill mannered,—and very different from the girls and boys of her generation. She had been born a lady; and had always been taught to act and speak like a lady: and, while she treated every one with kindness and consideration, she had never associated (on terms of equality) with the common people of the West. She had never soiled her hands with work that should properly be done by servants,—or others who were fitted to perform such tasks. She dressed with dignity and distinction, even though they were very poor: and held her head high, while she looked down upon the rest of the world who (in her estimation) were not as well born as she. Poor people, who place themselves on a pedestal,

are never very popular; and she led a lonely life. Even her children who had grown up in the West, among the democratic surroundings of pioneer communities, found her attitude very trying, at times; but they had to admire her grace and charm of manner.

Soon after Angeline came to Springfield, Mother Biddle came in to spend several days: and one day after dinner, while they were helping Maria with a quilt, Angeline said: "Maria is such a good cook, I always eat too much when I am here"; and Mother Biddle replied: "That's because you have no self-control; and, in time, you will grow to be an ugly, fat, old woman. Your lack of self-control has been the cause of all your trouble. If you'd followed your head, instead of your heart, you could have had a very different life. My father taught me to be temperate in all things; and that it was a good idea to quit eating while the food still tasted good. That a wise person leaves the table while he is still a mite bit hungry; for such a person is more apt to keep well,—and not get fat and pouchy as they grow old. Now look at Maria! She's losing her figure already; and is not pretty as she was when she was married. Her figure's more like an old woman's than mine is today; and it's all because she eats all she wants at every meal. Now, I always had all the food I needed; but never as much as I would have liked: but I've kept from havin' rheumatism and other miseries that ail most women of my age. Most people eat too much and sure 'nough dig their graves with their teeth. Maria would be as pretty as she ever was if she would keep slim, and dress as nice as she did when she was first married. Robert gave Maria a new silk dress at the same time as he gave me this one; but, instead of wearin' hers and lookin' nice all the time, as she should, she goes around in her old clothes and keeps her new dress put away in the chest." Angelina, who liked Maria, and thought that her ways were better than her mother's, said: "Well, I think that Maria looks nice all the time. Robert likes her cooking, and he likes to see her grow plump too. She takes care of her clothes; and always has something nice to wear to church,—or to other places he wants to take her. I've watched him when he goes places with Maria and the boys; and I never saw any body as proud of his family as he is. That new dress, of yours, is so nice I would think you would want to keep it for good; and wear one of your old dresses when we are quilting." But Mother Biddle replied: "Now see here, Robert gave me a new dress to wear. He likes to see his mother look nice, so I wear it most of the time. It's every lady's duty to look as nice as she can all the time:—and then, anyway life's so uncertain I might die before it's worn out if I don't wear it now. The only thing we are sure of is today, and Death: so I believe in havin' the best there is today, and tomorrow will take care of itself." Maria thought: 'she really means that Robert will take care of tomorrow; and that we will have to do without many things we need, so that she can have what she wants today'; but she did not say a word. She only watched her pattern, and worked rapidly with her needle and thread.

Another day, when Mother Biddle was there, Angeline said something about people not inviting her to their homes as often as they did, before they learned that she had left her husband; and her mother said: "Angeline, you have done nothing wrong; and these people can no more slight you than you could slight Queen Victoria, of England. In fact you have some of the same blood in your veins that the Queen has in hers. Always remember that your ancestors were of Royal blood,—and hold your head high,—and be worthy of them. If people don't invite you to their silly parties, just remember that no one of good breeding ever intentionally slights any one,—even the most humble; and that if people are ignorant and ill bred enough to try to slight you, they are not the kind of people you would want for friends anyway."

The Spring and Summer went rapidly by, and Fall was there before they realized that Winter would soon be upon them; and that a new member of the family would be demanding their attention.

On December first, 1842, Sarah Emma Biddle was born at their home in Springfield. She was not as pretty as the child they had lost; but she developed lovely brown curls and large, solemn blue eyes, that were so adoring,—she soon filled the place in their hearts made vacant by the death of the lovely Ellinorah.

CHAPTER XVIII

There were so many Sarahs in the Evans' family, they decided to call little Sarah Emma, Emma, so that her name would not be confused with her numerous aunts and cousins named Sarah. From the very first there was something strangely appealing about the child, and her parents, her brothers, and all of the other members of the family adored her; so that,—if Robert had not been such a strict disciplinarian she would have been very badly spoiled.

The next two years were uneventful ones for Robert and Maria; except that they were happy, busy years for each of them. Maria was busy with her church work and her home,—which was always in order; and with a larder well stocked with food for her family,—and the chance guests who frequently happened in at meal time. Her little boys and Emma were never neglected; for her greatest happiness came with the care and companionship of her children. She cared little for her own appearance; but kept herself well dressed to please Robert and the children.

Robert, like all of the members of his family, took great pride in his personal appearance; and was a conspicuous figure on the streets of Carlinville and Springfield, where his well tailored clothes, silk hat and polished boots,—together with his quick step, and almost military bearing, made him a person of striking appearance.

Although he expected instant and unquestioning obedience from his children, he was a kind and indulgent parent; and was never too busy or too tired to consider them or their welfare. He read to them and told them stories of the thrilling experiences of the early American pioneers:—always stressing the necessity for common sense and courage. Physical courage in the face of danger,—and moral courage in the face of temptation. His stories often illustrated the fact that *character* meant truthfulness, honesty and justice (tempered by mercy); and he impressed upon them the necessity for them to have all of these virtues if they expected to grow up to be ladies and gentlemen and Christians.

People of that day, almost without exception, believed in a personal Devil who was always snooping around to find ways to tempt children (as well as grownups) to do that which was wrong; but, whatever Robert believed about the Devil, he did not frighten his children by talking about him. He always appealed to their pride, to their ideas of right and wrong, and to their desires to grow to be ladies and gentlemen,—like their parents and grandparents before them. To be a lady or gentleman meant not only to practice self-control, and to have kind and gentle manners; but to have characters that were noble as well. He told them that to have good manners without character, was to be like a fine red apple that was rotten at the core.

He was very particular about their manners at table; and taught them to use their spoons and knives and forks properly, as soon as they

could sit up at the table. Maria thought that he was unnecessarily strict about such matters; but he said that good manners were vital, for they were the surest and most conspicuous signs of good breeding; and as Maria believed that a good wife always cooperated with her husband, she left the disciplining of the children to him, and seconded all of his efforts. He insisted that the children always say "yes-mam," "no-mam" (or sir) "please" and "thank you" at the proper times: so, under his strict training and kindly guidance, the children were models of good behavior:—and Robert was never so happy as when he could bring some of his friends home to meet his charming family. The key to his success was that he tried to be an example for them,—and they all adored him. He was kind and considerate of others, did not use liquor or tobacco and never played games of chance,—nor gambled. He never thought that his deals in stocks or real estate were a form of gambling. They were just investments,—and there was an element of risk in everything,—even in life itself.

He considered it a civic duty to buy stocks and bonds in public utilities, such as railroads, canals, etc. that would improve communities, stimulate business and (theoretically) raise the price of land: but since the panic of 1837 there had been very little money in circulation, and all kinds of improvements were at a standstill; so stocks and bonds were a drug on the market.

The income from Maria's inheritance bought some of the luxuries they enjoyed at this time. Maria and her sisters had always been advised (by their mother) to keep their property in their own names; and to use only the income, so that their principal could insure an independent old age,—and could then be passed on to their children. Robert, unlike most men of that time, was willing for his wife to keep her property intact: and it was only when some of his investments failed temporarily, and Maria put some extra money in his pocket, that they realized that she had a separate income. Robert was very generous (almost too generous) when his investments were successful; and, at such times, he gave her extra money for fine clothes for herself and the children,—or for other extravagances he thought she would enjoy: but Maria spent money very carefully,—and always had some left which she put away "for a rainy day."

It was about this time that Abraham Lincoln married Mary Todd: and, after living at the "Globe Tavern" for a few months, moved to the Monroe Street cottage where they were neighbors of the Biddles. Maria had known Mary Todd, slightly, for a number of years; and Robert and Abraham had been friends ever since Abraham first came to Springfield; so she called on Mrs. Lincoln as soon as they moved into the neighborhood; but they were never intimate friends. Maria had very definite ideas about the respect due a husband from his wife. She believed that a man should have the love, the respect and the obedience of all the members of his household. She was intelligent and well read, and had opinions of her own, which did not always agree with those of her husband: but she never questioned his statements

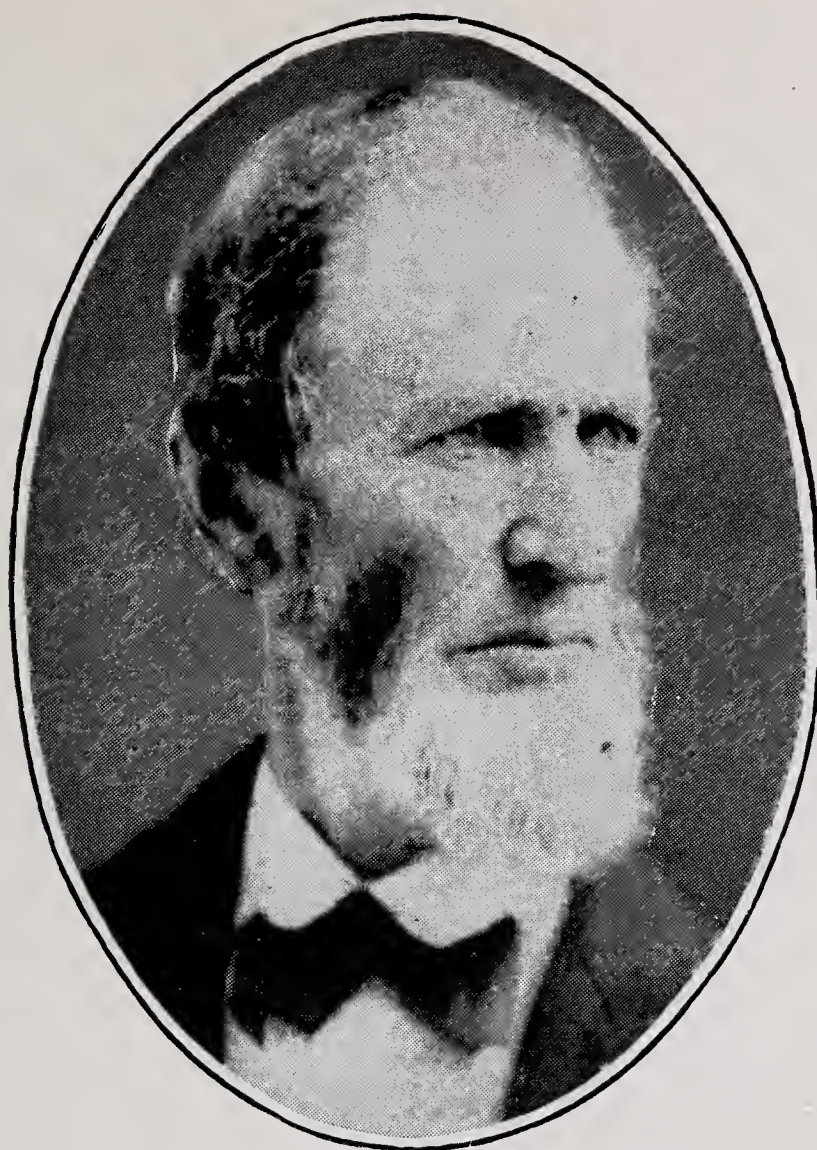
before others;—not even before their own children: for, from her point of view, she could not have done so without humiliating herself, as well as her husband, by such unladylike behavior. Mary Lincoln on the other hand, seemed to take a special delight in contradicting her husband, and humiliating him on every occasion.

The Lincolns were very poor, at this time, and Mrs. Lincoln was not well: so, considering that she had her pride, her poverty and sickness to contend with, Maria tried to excuse her rudeness for the sake of her husband, who was all that could be desired as a neighbor. He milked his cow and bedded his horse in the barn that was just on the other side of the fence from the Biddle's barn. This back fence, which was common to the two homes, was the usual meeting place where Robert and Abraham would talk over the news of the day; and where Abraham could find an attentive listener to his latest story:—for he always had a story to illustrate everything they talked about,—and he had a new one nearly every day.

On August the first, 1843, the Lincoln's first child, Robert Todd Lincoln, was born; and Mr. Todd, Mrs. Lincoln's father, came to Springfield to visit them soon after. He made his daughter a present of eighty acres of land, near Springfield; and arranged to pay Abraham \$120.00 a year for collecting claims from Illinois merchants, to whom he sold cotton goods. This made the Lincolns much more comfortable financially than they had been before.

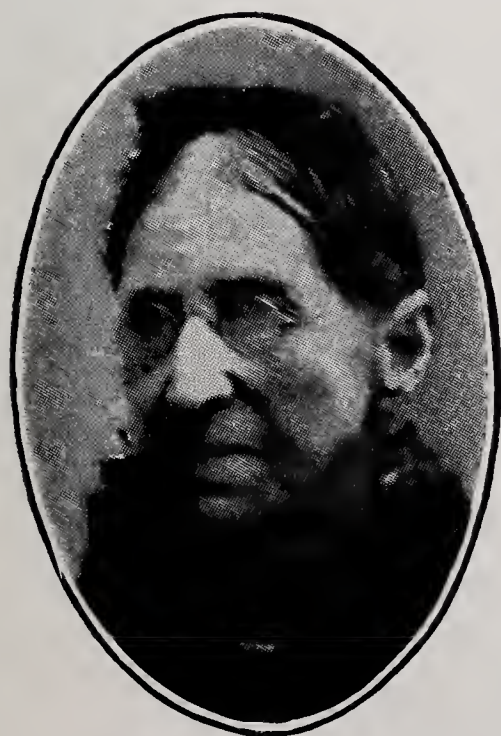
It was about this time that the "Millerites" became more prominent. They were the followers of William Miller, of New York, who had started preaching in 1831, about the second coming of Christ. He was not a well educated man; but claimed to be a great Bible student, who had studied the chronology of the Bible, and knew that the second coming of Christ and the end of time was at hand. He had followers from all over the States, and they were predicting that the faithful would ascend into Heaven; and the Earth, with the wicked, would be destroyed some time between the 12th and the 21st of March, 1844. William Miller wrote a book called "Dream of the Last Day," which was widely circulated by his followers. They had meetings, night and day, in "those last days" to beseech the wicked to change their ways and repent of their sins; so that they too might join the saints and ascend into Heaven to a life of everlasting glory;—instead of being cast into Hell with the wicked, to suffer eternal torment. They gained many followers; and the women held afternoon meetings, where they told of their experiences, and prayed, and worked on the white robes (called ascension robes) which they expected to wear when the Angel of the Lord caught them up and carried them to the Judgment-Seat of God. After a season of fasting and prayer, some of the Millerites decided that the exact date for the end of the world would be March the 14th, and the preparations were speeded for the great event.

Mrs. Brown went about her work singing Hallelujahs and sacred songs, — stopping occasionally to pray, — or to weep for her friends who would not prepare themselves for the great day. She



BENJAMIN ROBERT BIDDLE

MARY BIDDLE CARDWELL and her daughter
ORLENA CARDWELL MURRY showing the "Biddle Nose."



felt great sorrow when she thought of Maria and the children being numbered among the wicked, while she was safe in Heaven. Sometimes she was almost afraid that she could not be happy in Heaven while those she loved best were being tormented in Hell: but Maria told her that God had His own way of saving those who loved Him; and she felt sure that, even though they were not of the same faith, they would all meet in Eternity.

Finally, on March the 13th, Mrs. Brown came, for the last time, to wash and iron and clean the house thoroughly; so that, on the last day, there should be nothing left undone for which she might be held accountable. Late in the afternoon Mrs. Brown put on her ascension robe, to make sure that it was all properly finished and ready for the great occasion. The robes had been made to look like the robes artists painted on angels. They hung straight from the shoulders to the floor,—and were long enough to cover their feet as they rose in the air. Mrs. Brown was rather stout to wear an angel's robe becomingly: but, all things considered, it seemed an appropriate costume for the occasion. However, a heavy wind was blowing; and Mrs. Brown was afraid that, as she ascended in the air, the wind might blow her robe about and expose her legs to the sinners watching below. Such an eventuality was unthinkable to the modest Mrs. Brown; so she decided to put a draw-string through the hem, at the bottom of her robe, which she could pull tight, as she felt herself rising: and then there would be no possibility of exposing any part of her mortal body as she floated upward to put on immortality. The next day she fasted and prayed, as she waited with other Millerites, in the cemetery where they would be near their dear ones, who would be raised from their graves when Gabriel blew his trumpet: and where they could all be gathered up and taken to heaven together.

It was a strange day,—when even the unbelievers wondered if there might be a possibility that these fanatics had discovered some truth that the rest of them could not believe. Practically every one believed that every word in the Bible was the inspired word of God; and that every prophecy in the Good Book, regarding the second coming of Christ, would be fulfilled. Most of them believed that “of that day and hour knoweth no man, not even the angels in heaven.” Yet it might be that William Miller and his followers had, through the inspiration they claimed, been able to prophesy; so there was a certain amount of fear and unrest among the unbelievers.

There had been practically no business transacted for several days, and there was a decided religious revival in all of the churches, as the attention of the whole community was centered on the wickedness of man, the uncertainty of life, and the need of immediate and continual preparation for death.

The Millerites waited long and patiently for the coming of the Lord, until, at last, they were driven home by cold and hunger;—still believing that the hour was at hand, and expecting each day to be called.

Mrs. Lincoln belonged to the Episcopal Church, at this time, and had no patience with the people who were responsible for all of this religious turmoil; and it added greatly to her natural nervousness and irritability. After living in a home where all of the manual work was done by slaves, it was not easy for her to do her own housework and care for a little boy; so she always expected her husband to look after Robert (Bob) when he was not at the office or busy with his law practice or politics. Sometimes Abraham would walk home with Robert Biddle, and stop at the gate to finish their conversation: but she always seemed to be watching for him; and as soon as he stopped, would call impatiently: "Oh Abe! Abe! Come right home here and take Bob", and Abraham would smile and say: "I reckon the little woman gets pretty lonesome, here at home all day." And off he would go to take Bob, who was usually looking out of the window and waiting for him. Abraham's homely face would light up with love and happiness at the sight of his son, and he would lift him up in his strong arms and carry him around the house and yard, where the child could see all sorts of wonderful and interesting things.

Robert and Maria tried to spend part of a month, each year, at Tazewell. Maria's younger brother, Lafayette, had petitioned the court (as soon as he was fourteen years old) to appoint Robert Biddle his guardian; and there were other matters, concerning Maria's interest in her father's estate, that needed occasional attention. The Elijah Evans' estate had been difficult to divide among so many heirs without sacrificing some of the property for which there was no immediate sale. The lots, in the town of Tazewell were divided among the children, for they had a definite value. Tazewell was the County seat of Claibourne County, and was a rapidly growing town: but the thousands of acres of farming land was not all disposed of for several years. Hamilton Evans and his brother Henry took over the Inn and the Clinch River property: but the minor children had to be cared for, and educated, until they were of legal age; and the settlement of the estate dragged on for several years.

CHAPTER XIX

Angeline and little Henry were disturbing elements in the Biddle's family of well trained children; and, as she could not bear to have any one correct her child, Angeline decided to open a boarding-house, and earn her own living. It was not considered proper for any young woman to earn her own living if there was a man in her family who was able to support her: and Robert was not only very angry, but his pride was hurt as well: for he felt that Angeline's behavior gave people the impression that neither he nor his father were able or willing to support her: but Angeline was as self-willed as Robert, and no one could persuade her to change her mind. She knew of a large house which she could rent furnished; and she had no trouble in filling it with desirable boarders, during the session of the Legislature. She was able to get a negro woman, and her husband, from New Orleans, who had formerly belonged to the Atkinson family, to help her. Angeline, herself, had good-looks and charm, together with an unusual amount of nervous energy, which made it possible for her to accomplish an unusual amount of work each day; so her business venture was a success from the very first. She had established a reputation for her place before the Legislature adjourned; and other boarders were waiting to take the places of the Legislators when they returned to their homes after the session was over.

It was hard for Robert to forgive his sister, for leaving his home: but she was so happy, in her new-found independence, he soon realized that she and her son were a family unit that should have its own home and separate income. Angeline and Robert were too much alike to live peacefully in the same house. They were each charming individuals, who dominated those with whom they came in contact; and two such people can not live happily together. Maria could live with either of them, for she had a very different philosophy of life. While she had very definite opinions; which were usually the result of good judgment or experience, she seldom expressed her views about anything. It was not considered lady-like for women to have very decided views about anything; for they were supposed to be in accord with their husbands (or other male members of the family), who, legally, did the thinking for the entire family.

Maria was always a lady; and marriage had changed her from a lighthearted, fun-loving girl to a serious-minded, self-effacing woman: except when she was with her own people in Tennessee,—or with groups of women (such as quilting bees and sewing societies), where she would become her natural self again; and be the life of the party. She had the gift of bringing out the best in the people about her; and was always a welcome guest at any gathering. Being a wife and mother, in the 1840's, was a serious matter.

In February, 1846, another baby girl was born to Robert and Maria: and they named her Matilda, for Maria's sister Matilda Garrett; who had been disappointed in never having had a daughter

of her own. Little Matilda resembled her father more than any of the other children. There seemed even a possibility of her developing the Biddle nose, which some of them considered a badge of aristocracy. Robert was thoroughly convinced in his own mind, that all of the most successful and intellectual people in the world had large noses. He would sometimes speak of the outstanding people he had known who had large noses; and, as no one ever dared to argue the question with him, he lived out his life believing that a large nose was an index of outstanding character and intelligence. In fact he was so well fortified in this belief he would refuse the close friendship of any man with a small nose. Members of the family often laughed about this peculiarity of Robert's (which seemed to have been handed down to him by some of his ancestors who had the same idea); but no one laughed about it when he was present: for he took himself and his ideas very seriously.

Little Matilda slept and ate and grew, all unconscious of her heritage, and of the fact that she was destined, for many years, to be her father's favorite. Late that summer Robert's sister, Mary Cardwell and her fifteen year-old son James, came up from Jacksonville to make them a visit: and when James looked at little Matilda he said: 'Are you all a goin' to have the 'ristocratic Biddle nose? Sure 'nough you'r no pug-nosed white trash, are you Puggie?' Puggie was such a ridiculous name for the little girl with the big grey eyes and the thin nose, every one laughed;—and the baby, realizing that she was the center of attraction, laughed aloud:—and the name stuck to her for the rest of her life. A few years later no one, but members of the family, knew what the child's real name was; for from the day that her Cousin James called her Puggie, no one called her Matilda, and she was always known as Puggie Biddle. James Henry Biddle also had his name changed while Cousin James was there: for the family were constantly getting the two boys, with the same names, confused; so they decided to call James Henry by his second name, Henry, just as his father had been called Robert instead of Benjamin.

That same year another boy was born into the Lincoln family, and named Edward, for Mary Lincoln's brother-in-law, Ex-Governor Edwards, at whose home she had lived before she married: but Maria saw little of Mrs. Lincoln; for it was about that time that the Biddle family moved to their new home on Seventh and Jackson Streets, which was a much larger and better place, in the suburbs of Springfield. A few years later the Lincolns bought a new home on the next corner, at Eighth and Jackson, so they remained neighbors until the Biddles left Illinois, for the Pacific Coast in 1852.

The people of the States were growing more and more interested in the vast Territories of the west, where cheap land was to be had; and where opportunities seemed so much greater for those who were young, ambitious and willing to work. For many years people had been moving out west and settling in Missouri and Iowa:—and later to Kansas and Nebraska, where they wrote glowing accounts of their new homes. Some were even going to the Pacific Coast, where they

found a beautiful and fertile land, suitable for settlement. The people of that time were still imbued with the restless adventurous spirit that drew the first American settlers from Europe, to our Eastern shores. Perhaps it was the hazards and dangers of the unknown that fascinated them and called them ever westward.

The Biddles received letters from Harriett Campbell, several times each year, in which she told of the wonderful Willamette Valley, in Oregon, where they had founded their home. The Indian Mission, that they had gone to serve, had met with reverses, and had been abandoned soon after the death of Jason Lee, in 1845.

The Catholic Missionaries were mostly French, and understood the half-breeds and Indians better than the Methodists did: so when the Catholics founded a Mission on the north side of the Columbia River they took many converts from the Lee Mission; and created much discontent among those who remained. This convinced Jason Lee that he could not carry on his work without more equipment: so he went East to secure more money for his work; but he died before he accomplished his purpose. The Indians also contracted some contagious disease, which diminished their numbers so greatly, the work of the mission was almost discontinued.

Although Jason Lee had failed in his desire to Christianize and civilize the Indians of the North West, he had done more than any other one man to develop the Territory of Oregon: and to bring it under the Government of the United States. He had also founded the Oregon Institute, which was the first seat of learning in the Territory; and from which the sons and daughters of those early pioneers and Missionaries received their educations.

When the Jason Lee Mission, near Salem, was abandoned, Hamilton Campbell bought most of their live stock and moved them to his place in the Chehalem Valley; where he expected to go into the stock raising business. Harriett then wrote long letters to her family in Illinois, telling of the opportunities that were open to settlers in that Territory. The Mormons, under the leadership of Brigham Young, went as far west as the Great Salt Lake in 1847: and, through their Missionaries, told the world about the wonders of the great west. The newspapers printed long articles about the Pacific Coast; and the westward migration became one of the chief subjects of conversation throughout the States.

Another subject which was being discussed throughout the Union was the subject of slavery. The people of Illinois were having continual trouble about the fugitive slaves that escaped from Missouri and Kentucky; and realized that something would have to be done about the matter before many years. Robert and Maria understood the seriousness of the situation better than many of their friends; for they sometimes went by boat, to Knoxville, when they visited her family in Tennessee: and on those river boats, in Southern waters, they heard the slave-owners talk, and knew how bitterly they resented (what they called) Yankee interference in their affairs. They firmly believed that every State had a right to make its own laws

for the management of its own internal affairs; and that the Federal Government had no right to interfere; and must limit its law making to matters relating to inter-state questions and foreign relations.

Robert and Maria had been raised in Slave States; but their families had never believed in slavery as an institution. Since their marriage they had lived in Illinois, which had never been a Slave State, although there had been a few slaves there until about 1845: so they were able to view the subject with unprejudiced minds: and were sure that slavery would be abolished, sooner or later, over the whole nation. The logical way for this to be done was for the Federal Government to buy the slaves and give them their freedom.

A large part of the wealth of the Southern States consisted of slaves, who furnished their owners with free labor on the plantations: or, if they were not needed at home, they could be hired out and the owner could collect their wages. Many of the slave-owners would have been willing to sell their slaves to the Government, and then hire them, as wage-earners, on their plantations: but they thought that the Yankee agitators, who tried to incite the slaves to insubordination, were a worse menace to peace than slavery itself. There were other Southerners who would never be willing to free their slaves for any compensation the Government might give. They had acquired their slaves (like other property) by purchase or inheritance, and, having always lived under the system of slavery, were quite sure that they could not live properly without the service no free people would give. They thought they had a moral right to keep their slaves; and quoted the Bible to those who questioned them. There were those, too, in many of the free States, who believed that slavery was so wrong, any slaveholder must be an evil person, who should not be compensated by the Government, if it took something from him that was morally wrong for him to own. These people were very numerous and out-spoken; and would do everything possible to keep the Members of the House of Representatives from appropriating money for the purchase of slaves from their owners:—even if the Federal Government would be willing to settle the matter that way. There was even talk of war between the Slave States and the Federal Government.

It did not seem possible that the grandchildren of the men who had fought to free America and establish the Union, could war among themselves and destroy that union; but men were hot-headed, and there were times when it seemed that such a thing might happen. Perhaps if war did come, just as Henry and Robert were reaching manhood, they would be called to carry arms against their own people, of the South. It would be much better for them all to go West, and leave this turmoil behind; than to have their fine boys carried off to fight against their own flesh and blood. And so Robert and Maria thought longingly of the home that could be founded in the West;—far from the bitterness and political confusion that threatened to engulf them. Dr. Cardwell and Mary thought the same way about the matter: but Father and Mother Biddle had

grown too old to attempt the hazardous journey; and Robert would not consider leaving them, while they needed him, and depended on him. Maria, too, dreaded leaving her mother and all of her people; who would be practically lost to her forever,—if she went so far away.

When Mr. Biddle, Robert's father, died in 1848, Robert decided to go to Oregon Territory in the Spring; to see, for himself, if the country was as beautiful and well adapted for home-making as it was represented to be. He planned to take a load of merchandise with him, with which to pay the expenses of the trip; and then, if he could make the proper arrangements, he would return the next Spring for his family.

Oregon Territory was being rapidly settled, and the pioneers were expecting to have a Territorial Governor appointed by the next President. The friends of Abraham Lincoln were anxious for him to have the appointment, as he seemed to be especially qualified to govern a new territory. Some of his enemies were also anxious to see him sent away from the States; where he was becoming a person of importance, and his influence was feared by those who disliked his ideas and rough manners: but Lincoln, himself, had never asked for the position; and when it was offered to him he declined, and recommended a friend for the office. It was said that his wife refused to go to Oregon; as she believed in his political future in the States.

Then gold was discovered in California: and as tales of the fabulous riches found along the Western streams, reached the States, Oregon Territory was almost forgotten by the mad rush of gold seekers streaming westward. Some started at once by boat, going "around the Horn" or across the Isthmus of Panama, in the hope of getting a boat on the Pacific side. Those going over-land could not start until the following Spring: and people forgot about the financial and political problems of the time in the intoxicating dreams of wealth and adventure that were stimulated by the stories (brought in by each western mail) of the fabulous riches to be found in the mountains and streams of California. So Robert decided to go to California, with some of his friends, instead of to Oregon Territory as he had first planned.

In the few months, before Spring, he had to get his affairs in shape, so that his family and his mother could live in comfort, while he was away. His first task was to insure his mother a good home. His father had only a life interest in the farm on which they lived: so Robert deeded it to his mother: and she, in turn, deeded it by contract to Thadius Evans, and his wife Malvina, who were to reserve a certain room and furniture for her,—and to furnish heat and food,—and to give her the best of care during her lifetime. In payment for such services the Evanses were to receive the whole property at the death of Mary (Polly) Biddle. After this agreement was drawn up, signed and recorded, Robert knew that his mother would have the best of care, as long as she lived. However, she did not want Robert to leave her; and Maria, too began to worry about

his going so far away from home,—across those perilous western trails: but Robert never thought of danger. He had lived on the frontier most of his life; and to him, this trip was the promise of adventure, which urged him on toward the unknown.

He had talked of going west, for almost a year, when the news of the discovery of gold in California, reached Springfield; and he and John Weber decided to go together. They knew nothing about mining for gold; but they knew that all who went to California for gold would have to buy supplies; and that the first stores, near the mines, would reap a greater harvest than the miners themselves. John Weber had finished his work of copying the Illinois State Records; and was anxious to invest his savings in something that would bring in quick and abundant returns; so he was most enthusiastic about the California venture. Then, when other friends heard of their intention, they too wanted to join them: so that, before they started, three other members of the Second Presbyterian Church had arranged to become members of the Firm of Biddle, Weber and Company, to engage in the mercantile business in far off California.

The other members of the Company were: Augustus Eastman, a young man in his twenties, who had come to Illinois, with his parents, from Maine, in 1836. He had youth, enthusiasm, and enough money to buy his outfit and pay for his portion of the goods to be transported. Another, Lewis Johnson, had lost his wife, by death, a short time before; and longed for a change of scene and action. He too had money to invest and was well liked by the other members of the firm. John B. Watson was the oldest man taken into the partnership. He had been born in South Carolina in 1800, and was 49 years old: but his business ability,—and his experience while a surveyor and engineer of the Great Western Railroad, made him a valuable member of the expedition.

They delegated Robert and John Weber to go to St. Louis to buy a stock of merchandise, for a mining community, and have it sent by boat, around the Horn to San Francisco; while they would each fill a wagon with stock that they could take overland. They knew, by Harriett Campbell's letters, that flour, dried fruit, and other merchandise, were shipped from Chili, Mexico and the Sandwich Islands, and could be bought at the wharf's in San Francisco.

Much property changed hands during the winter and early spring, in and about Springfield, as men sold or mortgaged their holdings, to raise money to finance their trips to the Western gold fields. They planned and worked feverishly; so as to be ready to start as soon as the grass began to grow in the Spring;—for they had to have feed for their stock, along the way.

Farm products had been very cheap for several years; and the farmers, along Lick Creek, were much discouraged. Many of them were planning to join the party going to California: so the subject of migrating to the West was discussed with even more interest than the ever present problem of slavery.

It took all of Robert's available cash to buy his outfit and his share of the merchandise to be shipped to San Francisco; so he had to mortgage some of his property to get money to carry him until he became located in California. He also had to think of Maria and the four children he was leaving in Springfield, who must be taken care of until he could send them money from the West.

Maria, who always associated the word mortgage with disaster, could scarcely keep back her tears when she signed the papers: but she never questioned the wisdom of Robert's plans,—after he had once made a decision. She tried to cooperate with him, in every way, even though she felt that the world was slipping out from under her. However, Robert was sure that she would have no financial worries while he was away; for he would leave money for their immediate needs; and he expected the rents, from the farm lands and the notes that would fall due, at regular intervals, would keep them in comfort.

As the time for leaving drew near, there were about forty men, and a few women and children, ready to join the party for California. Among them was a young man, named Sam, who was anxious to drive an ox team and work his way to the gold fields: so they took him with them to handle one of the teams and help care for the stock. Robert and John Weber rode horses so that they could be on the look out and study the trail over which they expected to return after they had made their fortunes. They did not expect the gold rush to last more than a year or two: but if the West Coast was all that it was represented to be, they hoped to take their families out there later.

Robert bought a diary in which to keep a daily record of his journey; and a telescope for scanning the country (for Indians, etc.) as they rode along the trail. Their equipment was the best that could be obtained,—with six oxen for each wagon and four extra oxen for emergencies. Each wagon carried four barrels of grain from which they could feed the stock, sparingly, until the grass was high enough to satisfy their hunger. The barrels were to be used later for carrying water when they crossed the Great Desert. They carried smoked, dried and salted meat, dried fruits and vegetables, pickles, flour, sugar, tea, coffee, and other food to last six or eight months. Maria, and the other men's wives, baked chickens, bread, pies and cakes for the men to eat on the first days of their journey. Maria also made two large fruit cakes, which would furnish a little luxury for them, when they were far from home and the good things they were in the habit of having on their tables.

She had also knitted socks and gloves, and a nice warm scarf for Robert. In fact, she had done everything she could think of that might add to his comfort and safety: but, as the time drew near for them to leave, she worried more and more about the dangers of such an undertaking. She remembered the stories her parents and grandparents had told her about pioneer hardships; and she was sure that she should have made a greater effort to have kept him at home:

but she knew that nothing she could have done would have stopped him. So she kept her fears to herself and went about her work with a tranquillity that surprised every one,—including herself.

The day before he left Robert sat down to talk with the children and said: "Now children, Pa is going away, for a long time, and is expecting you to take care of Ma while he is gone. Aunt Angeline will be near you; and Uncle Will Cardwell, and Aunt Mary will come once in awhile; but you will be here all of the time, and you will be the ones to look after her every day. You are almost twelve, Henry, and Robert is ten;—so it won't be long before you'll be grown up. I'll expect you to do the work I planned for you,—and help Ma in every way you can. I want you to write to me often, to San Francisco; and tell me everything that happens at home. And Emma, a little girl six years old can help her mother too. You can wipe the dishes, and help keep the house clean,—and watch Puggie, so's she won't get into mischief. Now I want you all to remember everything I've told you,—and be good children while I'm gone,—and mind Ma. I'll try to bring you all something nice when I come home. And remember, if you are very good, and do everything I've told you, you'll be very busy and the time won't seem long."

Sam, and one of the other men, left that morning with two ox teams and the covered wagons: but Robert and John Weber waited to spend one more day and night with their families. They knew that, by starting early the next morning, they could catch up with the wagons before dark the following day. It was on the morning of March 27th, 1849 that Maria and Sarah Weber stood, with their children, at the gate; and through tear-dimmed eyes, watched their husbands ride down the road, on prancing steeds, like knights of old going forth to conquer the mysteries and dangers of an unknown world.

When the men reached the turn of the road, and could no longer see their wives, the women used the handkerchiefs they had been waving to dry their tears. The two women felt very helpless and alone, but they consoled each other, until Sarah had to take her children home, and Maria was left alone with her little brood.

Henry looked at his mother with eyes full of sympathy; and, putting his arm around her, he said, with trembling lips: "You know Ma, big boys like me don't cry,—no matter how bad they feel: and I'm goin' to take Pa's place now and take care of you and the children."

Maria gathered them all in her arms, and, smiling through her tears, she said: "Ma isn't goin' to cry either. We're goin' to be brave and happy, just like Pa wants us to be; and we'll write to him and tell him all about everything that happens at home:—so he won't be so lonesome either.."

She decided that she would not need Mrs. Brown's help while Robert was away: and as she then had all of the sewing, mending, knitting, weaving, house-cleaning, washing, ironing, cooking, and baking to do at home, Maria had little time to think of herself and her loneliness.

CHAPTER XX

After leaving Springfield, Robert and John Weber overtook the wagons several miles northeast of St. Louis; and they all went into the city together, where they met their partners, bought additional supplies, and started by boat, up the Missouri River to St. Joseph. There they planned to disembark and meet their other Illinois friends who would be waiting to join their train, for the two thousand mile trek across the wilderness to the "Promised Land."

While waiting at St. Joseph, they bought more supplies and repacked their wagons. At last, when they were ready to start moving, there were twenty wagons; and a number of men on horseback (with pack horses and mules to carry their equipment), in their train,—making a party of 35 or 40 men, five or six women and a few children. They were all equipped with the best outfits that money and careful planning could secure. Among them were many well educated men and tradesmen,—a doctor and dentist, a minister, a blacksmith, a wagonmaker, and others who, having lived in a pioneer country, could turn their hands to any necessary or useful work. Robert, with his partners and their guide, formed the nucleus of the party, and he was chosen Captain. Those who had joined them at St. Joseph were friends from Illinois and were known to be substantial citizens. In fact they were nearly all members of the Second Presbyterian Church of Springfield, who were carrying their Christianity with them into the wilds of the Western Frontier. They were temperate men too, who used liquor for medicinal purposes only; and had little patience with the human derelicts they sometimes met along the way.

Occasionally small parties would ask permission to stop overnight at their camp, or to travel with them for a day or two, for the protection afforded by a large party: but Robert would not countenance any drinking; for a drunken man was a dangerous man on the trail, where everyone must be constantly alert and ready for emergencies.

Robert wrote home often, and sent letters whenever they met parties returning from the west:—or left them at Forts or Stations along the way, where they could be picked up by hunters, trappers or returning immigrants, and mailed at the first post office.

They met Indians occasionally, who asked for food, guns and ammunition. They always gave them small quantities of food, but never gave, or traded, arms or ammunition. Their guide could speak the language of several of the Indian tribes; and could talk to others by a common sign language. Robert and John Weber had also known Indians, when they were young; and understood them well enough to meet them in friendship: so most of the Indians would look into their wagons, examine their stock, ask for bacon or flour,—and then go their way. Robert always gave them something; and, in return, they gave him much valuable information

about the country through which they were passing,—and the trail ahead.

Once five or six Indians on horseback joined them and rode along with them all day. The trail wound through mountainous country, with huge rocks (behind which Indians could easily have been hiding) dotting the landscape on both sides of the road. Every one in the party was nervous and alert; but, before sundown the Indians turned off to the right, rode down a dry ravine and left them. That night they feared an attack, and the usual guard was doubled; while those who slept kept loaded guns within reach:—and the wagon containing ammunition was placed where it would be most accessible in case of trouble. However the Indians did not molest them. Perhaps their guests of the day had been friendly Indians, as they had claimed:—or they may have decided that the company was too well armed and organized to fall an easy pray to an attack. While Robert, and his party, treated the Indians with great kindness, they always gave the impression that they were not afraid, and were always ready, and able to defend themselves if necessary. Indians seldom made an attack unless they were reasonably sure of success.

At last they finished the long up-grade journey to the Continental Divide, and reached Pacific Springs—whose waters flowed down Pacific Creek to the Big Sandy River,—then to the Green River, and eventually into the Pacific Ocean. The emigrants were delighted to reach this spot, and felt that the worst of their journey was over; for the general slope of the road, from that point, would be down grade until they reached the last range of mountains, where the gold-bearing Sierras would have to be crossed.

When they came to the ford of the Green River they found a man, by the name of Walsh, who was at work building a ferry. He agreed to carry them across if they would help him, for the rest of the day, while he finished his ferry. At times the river could be easily forded; but there had been an unusual amount of rain that Spring, which (while it made the feed more plentiful) had caused the rivers to be swollen and almost impossible to ford.

Mr. Walsh said that he was going to charge five dollars for each wagon he ferried across; and, as it would take almost an hour to cross the river and return for another load, he hoped to make at least \$75.00 a day, while the river was high; and then later he would sell his ferry to the first person who would make him a good offer. He was sure that he could make as much, or more, than he could at gold mining;—and hoped to reach California by October or November.

As they helped with the ferry, and then rested in the shade on the banks of the Green River, they wished that they might risk their lives in boats on its clear waters instead of plodding slowly behind ox teams, through storm and dust and desert thirst. The rest at Green River refreshed their teams, and they were eager to press on.

One Sunday evening, after they had had their song service, and just before the evening prayer, Robert addressed the gathering, and

said: "We have come from the Mississippi River, and are now beyond the summit of the Rocky Mountains,—over the longest part of our journey; but the worst of it is ahead of us. There will be little or no rain from now on: and much of our trail lies over the Great American Desert: but we must remember that others have passed this way before us, and they have left a trail that we can follow if we have good judgment, perseverance and faith,—and trust in the Lord. There are two things that we must keep uppermost in our minds,—1st, each and all of us can, if we try, do anything that others have done before us; and 2nd, the Lord does not do much for those who do not try to help themselves;—but He does give added strength to those who do their utmost. After Brother Walker has led us in prayer, we will go, at once, to bed; so that we can all be ready to start tomorrow morning at sun up."

They made a stop at Fort Bridges,—then went on through the Bear Valley to Soda Springs, and to Fort Hall on the Snake River. Here friendly Indians gave them fresh and smoked salmon,—the first that any of them had ever tasted. After following the Snake River some distance they turned southwest,—and over a steep mountain trail to Humbolt Wells. They then followed the Humbolt River to Tule Swamp (near the present site of Winnemucca). From there they went almost due west to Goose Lake and the head waters of Rio Sacramento (now called Pitt River). The trail here ran through lands claimed by hostile Indians; and they had to be careful to follow instructions in their Guide Book, which told them, never to camp in the timber, if it could be avoided,—never to let any Indians come among them,—never to let Indians have any ammunition,—never to neglect to keep the camp well guarded,—never to fire a gun within five day's travel south of the Siskiew Mountains (this was the area between the Siskiyou Mountains and Mount Shasta);—to keep as close together as possible, while traveling through the brush;—never to scatter to hunt game, or make any other division of their party;—and to always keep their guns in best fighting condition.

They went down the Lassen Trail to Lassen's ranch on Deer Creek; where they learned more about the "California Diggins", which consisted of the Northern and Southern Mines. The Northern Mines, most of which had been discovered by Major Pearson Reading and his Indians, were considered the best: so most of the Illinois emigrants decided to try their luck at Reading Springs:—which was described as a beautiful place, with plenty of fine spring water, about three miles from the Sacramento River and near a number of gold-bearing streams.

They forded the Sacramento River near the mouth of Cottonwood Creek, and drove north parallel with the river until they came to Reading Springs. The place, and its location, had not been overestimated by those who had described it to them. Aside from the fact that there was no level ground, the place was ideally located for a mining town: and the few people, who had come from Oregon, had pitched their tents on the hill sides, and were delighted at the

prospect of having a General Merchandise Store in their village. There was a road (or trail) running along the west side of the creek that divided the hills and formed a narrow valley, or gulch. It was little wider than a ravine; so the houses, on either side had to be built on an incline. Those pioneers named this narrow road "Main Street", and took up claims on either side for business houses and residences.

The firm of Biddle, Weber and Co., which consisted of B. R. Biddle, John B. Weber, John B. Watson, Lewis Johnson and Augustus Johnson, took up one claim, 62½ by 250 feet on the west side of Main Street; and another 35 by 120 feet on the east side of the street.

They put their wagons containing merchandise on the large lot on the west side of the street, where they started to put up their store building; and pitched their tents on the east side, where they planned to build their living quarters. One or two of the men slept in the wagons, to watch over and protect their property.

There were a large number of miners panning gold from the creeks north and west of Reading Springs; and their business was good from the start. As they needed the goods they had shipped from St. Louis to San Francisco, Robert and John Weber (who were also anxious to get mail from home) volunteered to take the wagons, and extra drivers with the ox teams, to the "City" for their supplies, while the other partners stayed at Reading Springs to finish their store building.

A friendly Indian went with Robert and John Weber, to act as guide; and a number of men, on horse back with pack animals, wanted to accompany them as far as Sacramento; for they felt safer from hostile Indians if a number of men traveled together. However most of the Sacramento Valley Indians were Digger Indians, who were great cowards and usually friendly to the whites.

CHAPTER XXI

From Reading Springs they followed the western bank of the Sacramento River, through uninhabited country, until they came to the town of Freeport. It was a flourishing little village opposite the mouth of the Yuba River, which many of the pioneers considered the future metropolis of the Sacramento Valley. Twenty miles further on, below the mouth of the American River, could be seen the tents and houses that made up the town of Sacramento. They crossed the ferry at that point, and Robert arranged for their drivers to care for the oxen and wagons while he and John Weber went, by boat, to San Francisco.

San Francisco was the chief city of the Pacific Coast; and was always referred to as "The City"; so Robert had always pictured it, in his mind, as a neat and orderly town, of well constructed business buildings and comfortable homes;—with graded streets and board sidewalks; but, in reality the town had been built on rolling hills of deep and shifting sand. The streets seemed to run in several directions, instead of being parallel,—in two directions,—and making right-angle crossings at each intersection,—as Robert was sure they should in any well planned town. "The City" had a population of about 1500 people, many of whom were living in tents; and the buildings had been poorly and hastily constructed of freshly sawed lumber. However, some new, and better, buildings were then being built of imported lumber and bricks.

As ships in the harbor unloaded, the goods and produce were thrown on the ground near the wharfs, where they waited to be claimed, or sold, or carted to shelter. There were a couple of warehouses near the water front; but they were entirely inadequate for the great ship loads of merchandise being brought into port. It was almost impossible to get carpenters or mechanics to work in "The City"; for when they heard of the fabulous riches that were found in the mines, they left their work, without notice, to go to the "diggins": so Robert's first impression of San Francisco was that it was a cold, bleak, shabby place filled with dust, disorder and confusion.

As he started to walk up Kearney Street, toward the Plaza, he met a Mr. Ware he had known in Illinois: but he was on his way to the post office; and was so anxious for letters from home, he could not stop to talk to any one: so Mr. Ware turned around and walked up the hill with him; and told him all about his experiences in California.

He and Mrs. Ware had lived on Lick Creek, near Springfield: and had traveled by boat, and the Isthmus of Panama, to California. They started soon after Robert and his party had left in March. When they reached San Francisco they were able to buy out a man who had built a small hotel, or boarding house. Mr. Ware and his wife, with the help of a Chinese boy, had fixed the place up and made it as homelike as possible; and their home-cooked-meals proved

such a novelty they could not handle all the people who applied to them for board: but, he continued, they could always make room for old friends like Robert and John Weber, whenever they came to The City.

When they reached the post office, and received their mail, they had so many letters and papers, their pockets would not hold all of them; so Robert had to stuff some of them into his carpet-bag before they went back, down the hill, with Mr. Ware, to the boarding house they had been hearing about. He gave them a small room that had just been vacated, where Robert and John Weber arranged their mail in chronological order, and began to read. At noon they went downstairs to the best dinner they had eaten since they left Springfield,—and met more Illinois friends at the table: but they could not stop to talk very long until after they had read all of their precious letters;—for these letters were the first news of their families they had had since they left home, more than six months before. The friends they met at dinner understood, for they too were far from their homes and those they loved most.

The boys, Henry and Robert Jr., wrote about their school and the games they played with the neighborhood boys;—and about the horse and cow and chickens;—and the chores they did for Ma, and all the childish family gossip:—but never a word about anything that might worry him or cause him to fear that all was not well in his home at Springfield. In the last letter he read Robert Jr. told him about little Puggie falling onto the cistern; but, he added: “Ma pulled her out right soon, so she is all right. Ma felt kind of sick afterwards and Mrs. Weber took Puggie over to her house for a visit. Emma is visiting Aunt Angeline.”

The letters from Maria told about their relatives and friends, the affairs of the church, and the incidents of her home life with the children, in a manner to lead him to believe that all was well at home. There was no letter from Maria written after little Puggie’s accident; and he was sure they were not telling him everything: for their sixth child had been expected in August; and he knew that Puggie’s accident must have been a great shock to her mother.

One of the steamers from Panama was several days overdue; so it was possible for him to get more letters before he returned to Sacramento. In the meantime he tried to make arrangements to have mail sent to Reading Springs.

That night he visited with his old Illinois friends at the boarding house. Many of them had newspapers from home; and they were read with eagerness, although the latest news was three or four months old. The friends were all enthusiastic about the West, and agreed that a man who was sober and industrious could not fail to make money; but most of them believed that the prosperity was only temporary; and were planning to return to the States before the supply of gold, in the hills, was exhausted. Some believed that many of the best class of emigrants would remain; and that San Francisco, with its fine harbor, would grow to be a great city:—and those men

were putting all of their available money into town lots. Some had already made fortunes buying and selling lots; but the lots were as high as they were in Springfield, where a fine city was already established: and Robert, who had always been a speculator in land, said that he would not take one of those sand lots for a gift.

The next morning he went down to the waterfront to buy merchandise; and spent the entire day selecting goods to meet the needs of the miners who packed out from Reading Springs. He also laid in a meager supply of luxuries for the people of the village. Besides the boxes of freight he had sent from St. Louis; he bought coffee from Brazil; blankets, flour, and dried peaches from Chili; tea and rice from China; coconuts and yams from the Sandwich Islands; and dried apples, smoked meats, drugs, medicines, boots, shoes, mining equipment, hardware, ammunition; and a vast assortment of other things that would be needed in a rapidly growing mining community. As he made his purchases he arranged to have them loaded on the boat that was starting up the river, for Sacramento, the next morning. When he started back to the boarding house he noticed that people were all looking toward the top of the hill above the city, where some men were waving flags,—and some one said: “They are signaling to tell us that a boat is just coming into the bay, and will dock at the wharf before sundown.”

That night they went again to the post office and got the mail that came in on the boat. Among the letters was one from Maria;—written while she was still in bed after the birth of their son, whom she had decided to name Edwin Weber Biddle,—if that name met with Robert’s approval. They also got mail for all of the other members of their firm; and for the rest of their overland party who were living at, or near, Reading Springs; for all of their letters had been sent to San Francisco, to await permanent addresses from the emigrants when they reached California.

They had been told that the winters in California were very mild; and planned for members of their firm to go to San Francisco frequently to buy goods; but plans are not always carried out. The purchases they made, on this trip, filled their wagons; and they were glad that they had brought their six-ox-teams to haul it over the rough roads. Business was so good, it was only a short time before two other members of their firm made a trip to San Francisco for more stock: but before their return, rain had been falling for almost a week and the streams were so swollen, and the roads so slippery, they had great trouble getting back at all. However business continued to be excellent, for new miners kept coming in to try their luck at the “diggings”; and had to be outfitted before they went into the mountains in search of the gold-bearing streams. A number of Chinamen, who were panning gold along the creeks that ran into the Trinity River, bought enough rice to last all winter.

Reading Springs was the only trading post north of Freemont; and soon pack trains were starting from there for Weaverville and Southern Oregon,—as well as to the numerous mining claims in

Northern California. Biddle, Weber and Co. had most of the roof on their building when the rains started on the second day of November; and the rest of the building was all but finished. They had also started their log cabin across the street. The side walls were up and the rafters were in place; so they stretched a tent canvas over the top, and had very comfortable living quarters for temporary use. They had expected to finish it properly before winter set in; but the rain did not stop long enough for them to accomplish anything until the winter was almost over.

When the creeks and rivers continued to rise the miners all had to give up work; and soon the town became crowded with the drenched, homeless men, seeking food and shelter for the winter. It was soon impossible for wagons and ox-teams to make the trip to Sacramento, and return with merchandise. When the people realized how far they were from the source of supplies—with the possibility of being flood-bound in that canyon all winter,—many of them became panic stricken and decided to leave while they could still get out on horseback. They offered to sell everything they had, which could not be carried out on their horses, for whatever anyone would pay.

R. J. Walsh, who had built the ferry at Green River, early in the summer, had made money rapidly, and then sold out at an exorbitant price. When he arrived at Reading Springs he got a lot next to Biddle, Weber and Co., where he also started a trading post; and having more ready money than any one else in the village, he was able to buy large quantities of supplies from the panic stricken miners, who wanted to get to Sacramento or San Francisco before the entire low-lands were flooded. He bought their flour for 20 and 25 cents a pound, which had cost (in freight alone from Sacramento) 50 cents a pound: and that winter it sold for \$2.50 a pound at Reading Springs. Biddle and Weber's wagons of merchandise were the last to get through from Sacramento: so, while they did not get as much from the unfortunate miners, they were well supplied with goods when the floods started to close in on them: and were able to make an enormous profit during the long, wet winter.

Considering that the settlement was new, and so poorly prepared for living through three months of continual rain, it was remarkable that there was so little real suffering. Dr. Benjamin Shurtheff, a physician from Massachusetts (who had bought the corner of the R. J. Walsh claim next to Biddle, Weber & Co.) took care of the few who were sick and needed attention.

James Mackley took up the claim north-west of Biddle, Weber & Co., on which he built the St. Charles Hotel; which, at that time, was the best hotel between Oregon City and Sacramento.

February brought sunshine and a recession of the flood waters that had held them prisoners for so long; and soon the little village was again a beehive of activity. The firm of Biddle, Weber & Co. had a large amount of gold on hand and decided to declare a dividend, of several hundred dollars each, to be sent home to their fam-

ilies: so, even before the roads could be traveled by their teams, Robert and John Weber started south, on horseback, with a train of pack mules. They expected to buy emergency supplies in Sacramento, which could be sent back immediately with an Indian driver, while they went on to San Francisco. There they could change their gold dust into negotiable paper, buy their merchandise directly from the ships, and send money to their families in Springfield by Adams and Co.'s Express. When they went to the boarding house, in San Francisco, they met an old friend from Springfield who was sailing that afternoon, and offered to take letters for them to their families in Springfield: so, instead of sending their letters and packages by mail or express, they intrusted them to their friend for safer and more prompt delivery.

As the Panama Liner, carrying their friend with their precious letters and packages, turned around the bend of the bay, a freighter from China was tying up at the wharf; and they went aboard to buy rice and other commodities for their store. As they were leaving the vessel they stopped to watch a Chinese merchant who was examining silks he was buying for his San Francisco store. Among the things imported were a number of beautiful, silk embroidered shawls. One of them was especially handsome,—pure white, and embroidered so perfectly one could not tell which was the right,—and which was the wrong side. The merchant held it up and said: "There is a shawl fit for a queen". Robert thought of Maria, his queen,—and how beautiful she would look in a shawl like that. His Maria, who was living so far away with her infant son,—and his four other children, and carrying the burden of their care alone.

As he saw her, in imagination, with her plucky smile and undaunted courage, he wanted to do something special for her; and that shawl,—fit for a queen, was a fitting gift for her. The shawls had been brought from China to sell for \$100.00 each, and the white one was the handsomest of them all. As the merchant held it up for them to see, Robert took out his little buckskin bag of gold dust and his scales, weighed out \$100.00 of the dust, and told the Chinaman to do up the shawl for shipment to the States. Then he remembered that there were others at home who would like presents from San Francisco; so he bought two small shawls for his little girls, and two very small lacquered boxes. Into the lacquered boxes he put gold nuggets, in nests of cotton, for his boys. The gifts were then all packed in a handsome lacquered box, wrapped in waterproof cloth, and taken to Adams & Co. Express office for safe shipment to Springfield.

CHAPTER XXII

A man named Johnathan Otis, and his partner, went into the lumber business at Reading Springs early in the spring of 1850; and there was such a demand for their whip-sawed lumber they could not supply it even at the exorbitant price of one dollar a board-foot,—or one thousand dollars for every thousand board-feet of lumber. Timber was plentiful and sawing lumber brought better returns than panning gold, to those who had had the foresight to bring the saws and other equipment from the States.

The buildings of Biddle, Weber & Co and the St. Charles Hotel were the first buildings finished; but log and frame houses sprang up all over the hill sides: and there were even some houses that had been built in sections and shipped, around The Horn, from the States, all ready to put together upon their arrival.

Gold seemed plentiful, and new strikes were made along the numerous creeks, as prospectors and strangers, from all parts of the world, flooded the community. Slow moving ox teams were constantly on the road, bringing fresh supplies from San Francisco and Sacramento. As there were no roads beyond Reading Springs, pack trains, of mules, were used to carry supplies from there, over the mountain trails, to the Trinity, Salmon, Scott and upper Sacramento mines;—and as far north as Oregon.

Almost overnight the village, that so many miners had forsaken the winter before, became the great wholesale and retail distributing center of northern California. The place was unique, when compared with other mining towns of the “wild and woolly west”; owing, no doubt, to the fact that a goodly number of its first inhabitants were recruited from that band of honest, self-respecting, church-going Christians from central Illinois, who had brought their Christianity and their ideas of law and order with them. While the town contained a large number of professional gamblers, and the saloons ran wide open, it also had several churches that were well attended. Although Sunday was the day when miners came to town to drink and gossip and buy their supplies, Biddle, Weber & Co. never sold or delivered goods on that day. However the quality of their merchandise, and their reputation for courtesy, honesty and reliability, insured them the cream of the business: and, although the town was an outpost of the early California settlements, law and order prevailed from the beginning.

By the Spring of 1850 Reading Springs was lighted, at night, by oil lanterns hung at intervals along the Main Street; which was crowded night and day with freighters and pack animals. Sometimes, at midday, the confusion was so great it was not considered safe for women to cross the street without help.

At a public meeting held on June 8th, 1850, in front of R. J. Walsh's store, the name of the town was changed from Reading Springs to Shasta. Among the early comers to Shasta were Mr. and

Mrs. Johnston, from Iowa, who kept boarders at their log house on the hill, about fifty yards above the business section. As the fourth of July approached, and their boarders talked about the celebrations they had attended in their home towns, the Johnstons decided to have a patriotic celebration, by which they could make some money,—and also give every one a good time.

They built an arbor of pine poles and covered it with branches to shade the tables, which were made of lumber,—with long benches at the sides. They served a fine home-cooked dinner of roast beef, baked ham, potatoes, bread and butter and dried peach pie. The butter had been brought from The States in brine; but the long hot trip up the Sacramento Valley had added to its strength, without improving its flavor. However it was butter and was considered a great luxury. The price of the dinner was five dollars, and more than fifty men attended. An American flag floated on the breeze from a pine tree near by; patriotic songs were sung; the Declaration of Independence was read; and many humorous and patriotic speeches were made. There were men present from almost every state of the Union, and from several foreign countries as well.

California had now become a State; and in September representative men met in front of the St. Charles Hotel and nominated John B. Watson, of Biddle, Weber & Co., for the State Assembly. He was a typical southern gentleman (born in South Carolina) who was well educated; and had moved west to Illinois while he was still young enough to learn to work. He first taught school in Springfield, then later he was elected County Surveyor: and was one of the engineers selected to build the Great Western Railroad: so he would have been an ideal member of the California Legislature.

However, a few days later, a tall, lean, long-legged young man on a small, thin mule,—with his feet almost touching the ground, rode up in front of a saloon, dismounted, tied his mule to a post, and turning to the gathering crowd said: "I understand you all had a meetin' in town and nominated a candidate fo' th'sembly." Some one spoke up and said: "Yes we nominated Mr. Watson". Whereupon the stranger said: "Well Boys, my name's A. Z. McCandless, and I'm a candidate fo' th'sembly; and whiskey's my platform;—and whisky's goin' to win this here fight! Let's all go in and have a drink." They all joined him, without a dissenting voice, and the McCandless boom was on. He stuck to his platform and was triumphantly elected: for whiskey won over brains, character and personality, in that first election in Shasta County, in the new state of California.

In September, 1850, the people of Shasta experienced a real Eastern thunderstorm, accompanied by a heavy rain that lasted all night; so the grass started to grow, and there was soon plenty of fresh feed for the stock. The Fall and Winter were mild. The roads had been improved, the river boats brought freight as far as Freeport; and the ox teams were on the road, all winter, carrying supplies to Shasta for the northern mines.

As they were expecting a large shipment of goods on the Steamer Panama, which was due on December 20th, Robert went to "The City" to personally check and reload the merchandise. For some reason the steamer did not arrive on time, so he waited,—hoping to get word of the missing boat. On the first of January he bought some stationery, on one side of which was printed a picture of San Francisco; and went back to his boarding house (which had recently changed hands) and wrote the following letter:

"San Francisco, January 1st, 1851,

My dear Maria:

As I was passing from my boarding house to the Shipping, I met very unexpectedly Wm. Taylor, Mr. Ware and Sam, who lived on Lick Creek; and as they are going immediately to Springfield, I send you a few lines.

There has nothing occurred of interest since I last wrote, except that the weather had been as beautiful as Spring. On our table today we have lettuce of large size, and raddishes. There are no public displays today,—except the semi-annual meeting of the Pioneers of California, but every person looks glad,—greeting their friends with a Happy New Year. There are many things got up for the day. As the steamer Columbus leaves today at 3 o'clock P.M. the sheet upon which I am writing was issued this morning, and they are taken as fast as they are struck off, to send home to friends. It gives some idea of what this place is. I have several other views which I will send as I find matter to write. As I wrote before, I shall remain here a week, and shall address you again,—also the boys. The Mail Steamer Panama, due at this port 10 days ago, has not arrived and much anxiety prevails about her probable fate. My delay here is in part owing to my wish to get letters. I feel sure you have written,—together with my boys. As I stand on the wharf and see the faces that are made bright at the prospect of soon reaching their homes, my thoughts are carried with them and I anticipate the joy of my return. I am afraid it makes you feel sad that so many are coming and leaving me behind. I don't know of any others from Springfield who will reach home before me. I remitted by Adams and Co. Express on yesterday, a package containing \$703.00, upon which freight and insurance was paid to Springfield, Ills., directed in the care of James L. Lamb. You will pay it over as marked on the several packages. Mr. Starr informed me a few days ago that there had been some neglect about the first draft I sent you for \$300.00, on the part of his brother. I hope all is set right. The draft is good. I have but a few minutes left to conclude this letter. I will close by wishing you all a Happy New Year,—That it may bring in its train the richest blessings of life,—that we may meet in love and the enjoyments of home,—that the children may be good children,—growing up in intelligence and virtue,—rewarding our hearts and making us glad. Accept this sheet as a small token of love and regard,—cherishing it for having been sent on the first day of the year 1851, from the City of San

Francisco, State of California. It represents this, the greatest City of the Pacific Coast as it is today. Keep this profile and contrast it, if we live, with what it will be in 1852. Present my New Years Compliments to all the friends,—to Angeline and the Jacksonville folks. To the children I say;—I have thought of them often today. I hope they have been merry today,—and I wish a very happy New Year.

As ever I remain yours in affection and

Love, Ever—Farewell—

B. R. BIDDLE.”

He took the letter down to the steamer and watched his friends start on their homeward journey; and his heart was sad for he longed to be with his loved ones; but he must first go back to Shasta with his merchandise. Then he could settle up his business affairs and make his plans for going home: but he wished to pay a short visit to his sister in Oregon before returning to the States.

He was fully convinced that the West offered the best opportunities for young people; and he wanted to bring his boys to a place where land was fertile and cheap; and where they could grow up in a new country, and help with its development. He thought that the gold in the hills and streams of California would be exhausted in a few years; and that the great potential wealth of California was in agriculture.

John Weber was also anxious to get back to his family in Illinois. While he was delighted with the results of his business venture in Shasta, he had decided to return permanently to his home in Springfield. His trip across the plains, and that first hard winter in California, when every man had to work under stress of storm or flood or desert heat,—had shown him again and again that the loss of his hand was a serious handicap in a new country: and he was sure that he could make a living, and be much more comfortable in his home town than in a pioneer country.

A friend, by the name of James Deigh, wished to buy out their interest in their business, and, as he would make an acceptable partner to the other members of the firm, the transfer was arranged at once. When the Shasta property was disposed of Robert prepared to accompany one of the Oregon pack trains, and made the trip to Salem without any unusual difficulty. As he rode over the country he was impressed by the grandeur of the scenery and the apparent fertility of the soil.

He found his sister Harriett Campbell, and her family, well and happy,—and over-joyed to see him again after the lapse of twelve years. Her husband, Hamilton Campbell, had taken up land in the Willamette Valley; and when the Jason Lee Mission had been abandoned in 1844 he had bought their stock; so he had a well equipped farm, where he spent much of his time. Harriett lived in town where the children could go to school. She was a much handsomer woman

at 34 than she had been when she left home, at 22; and her four girls were as fine looking children as Robert had ever seen.

Little Mary, who had been christened just before the missionaries left New York, was almost as tall as her mother, and had a saint like face and manner that made her the idol of the Methodist community in which they lived. Maria, the second daughter, was Robert's immediate favorite,—not entirely because of her name; but because of her friendliness and good behavior. Gustavious, their only boy, was a fine lad of eight. Little Harriett was in her sixth year, and seemed unusually talented and bright. Her mother said: "Hattie is a willful child, who makes friends with every one; but, I am afraid she will never be as pretty as her sisters." Robert quickly replied: "Well she has a way with her that will always make her popular, and 'pretty is as pretty does' is a true saying. If she is good and well mannered she will have all the beauty she will ever need." Their youngest daughter Esther was as beautiful as little Ellinorah had been; but she was getting spoiled; for, although she was not three years old, she seemed to manage the whole family.

Robert was delighted with Oregon,—with its snow-capped mountains, beautiful forests and fertile valleys. Everything that was planted seemed to grow luxuriantly: and he decided that that was the place to establish his family. The government, for the next two years, was offering 320 acres of land to every man and wife (160 acres to each) who would settle in Oregon Territory: which was an inducement for him to bring his family as soon as possible.

The early missionaries, and their friends, who had gone to Oregon to carry Christianity to the Indians and to build an American colony in the far west, had been a very different class of people from those who had rushed into California when gold was discovered: and Robert liked that environment better for his growing family. Good schools and churches were already established in the towns of the Willamette Valley. Cheap and satisfactory labor was furnished by the Indians, and living conditions seemed to be ideal. Robert and his brother-in-law spent a couple of weeks riding over the country, looking at land and planning for the future. They decided that the greatest need, for that part of Oregon Territory, was a nursery where the settlers could buy fruit trees and berry vines, to plant around the new homes that were being built so rapidly.

Two of Robert's old Springfield friends, who had gone to Oregon to learn about the country at first hand, met him at Oregon City; and they started home together on June the 20th, 1851,—full of enthusiastic plans for the homes they planned to build for their families in the Far West.

San Francisco January 1st 1851 -

My Dear Maria

As I was passing from my boarding
house to the Shipping I met very respectfully Mr. Taylor
and Mr. Ware and Sam who live on this creek, and
as ~~they~~ they are going immediately to Springfield,
I send you a few lines - There has nothing occurred of
interest since I last wrote, of any particular note.
That the weather is as beautiful as Spring - on our table
to day we have letters of large size & fine dishes - there
are no Public displays to day - except the semi annual
Meeting of the Farmers of California, but every person
looks glad - greeting their friends with as happy smiles
as you - there are many things got up for this day, as the
Steamer Columbia leaves to day at 3 o'clock P.M. the
sheet upon which I am writing was issued this morning
& they are taken as fast as they are struck off, to send home
to friends, it gives some idea of what this place is - I have
several other news which I will send as I find matter to
write - as I write you before, I shall remain here a week and
shall address you again - also the large, the mail Steamer
Panama, due at this port 10 days ago, has not arrived, much
anxiety prevails about his probable fate - my delay here, is
in part owing to my wishing to get letters, I feel sure you
have written, together with my boys - - so I stand on the
the fact that is made bright in the prospect of Sam reaching
his home, my thoughts are carried with them, and anticipate
the joy of return - I am afraid it matters you feel that
that so many are coming leaving me behind - I don't
know of any others from Springfield that will reach



SAN FRANCISCO

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SCOTLAND IN 1851
Illustration of the town of Glasgow, Scotland, showing the city and the harbor.

have been me it remitted by Adams \$10.00 per an. yesterday
a Package Car carrying \$700.00 - upon which freight and insurance
was paid to Springfield \$10.00 directed to the care of S. L. Lamb,
you will pay it over as marked upon the several Packages.
Mr. Starr informed me a few days ago - that there had been
some mistake about the first draft I sent you for \$300.00 -
on the part of his brother, I hope all is set right - the draft
was good - I have but a few minutes left me to conclude
this letter - I will close by wishing you all a happy New
Year - that it may bring in its train, the richest blessings of
life - that you may meet in love, & the enjoyments of home,
that the children may be good children - growing upon
intelligence and Virtue surrounding our hearts and
making us glad - accept this then as a small token
of Love & regard, the which it has having been sent
on the first day of the year 1887 - in the City of San Fran-
cisco, State of California - it represents, then, the greatest
City of the Pacific Coast as it is this day - keep the profile,
and contrast it, if in time with what it will be in 1888,
Present my New Year's Compliments to all the friends -
to the young - to the & reasonable folks - & to the children
I say - I have thought of them often to day & nothing
have been more to day - and I wish a very happy New Year
to ever & remain yours in affection and

Love, Ever - your well

Wm. F. Fiddler



CHAPTER XXIII

While our argonauts were seeking their fortunes in the Far West, their wives, in Springfield, were drawn together by their common solicitude for their adventurous husbands. They helped each other, gossiped together, and exchanged every scrap of news that came from the West Coast.

Henry Biddle took his responsibilities as the head of the family very seriously; and, with the help of Robert Jr., fed and curried the horses, kept the wood-boxes filled, made the fires, milked the cow, took care of the chickens; and attended to all of the "men's work" at their home. Twice each week, one of the boys churned the cream and helped his mother make the butter.

The Biddle home was in the center of a large lot in the suburbs of Springfield, where they had a fine vegetable garden;—and where the neighborhood children played in adjacent vacant lots. The Merryman children, who lived near by, and their cousins from Lick Creek, were about the same age as the Biddle children and they formed the nucleus around which others gathered to join in their games. Even little Bob Lincoln, who was always running away from home, played out there with the younger children every time he could get a chance.

Time passed rapidly, but everything did not work out as Robert had planned. Since he was not there to attend to his business, the men who had bought his property failed to make their payments as they had promised and Maria soon found herself running short of money to meet her household expenses. She had to economize in every way. The tuition for the boy's schooling was a real problem; but she wanted them to get as much education as possible while they were in Springfield: for, if they went to the Western Territories when their father returned, they might never have another opportunity to attend such good schools.

However, as money grew scarcer, she was afraid that she could not pay their tuition much longer:—and yet she could not consider sending them to the free schools that had been established for the children of the poor. People of any standing would not accept charity, even to the extent of allowing the government (which meant their neighbors and other taxpayers) to educate their children.

Angeline suggested that the boys might sleep in the trundle bed in their mother's room: and then their room, and the spare room, could be rented for enough to pay for their schooling;—until the overdue interest was paid, or Robert could reach California and send money from there. Maria, who was determined not to add anything to her husband's indebtedness, welcomed the idea of taking roomers; and her front rooms were soon rented to members of the legislature and their wives.

Robert, and his friends, had written often and given their letters to men returning from the west, or left them along the way where they could be picked up by hunters, trappers or returning immi-

grants: and it was remarkable that so few of those letters failed to reach their destination. As the party went further west the letters were necessarily fewer and further apart.

Maria and the boys wrote something each week, which they planned to combine into one long letter, and send in time to reach San Francisco before their father would get there. They also saved newspapers and clippings to send at regular intervals.

Like most well-to-do people of that time, the Biddles drew their drinking water from their own well, which was about twenty feet deep. The well was just a few steps from the kitchen door, at the side of the back porch: and was lined with brick, and boarded up several feet above the ground. The top was covered by wooden doors that were opened only when the wooden buckets were let down into the well to draw up the water. On the other side of the porch was a cistern for storing rain water, which was about four feet deep and five feet in diameter. It was also lined with bricks and boarded over the top, except for a wooden door which was kept locked, and was opened only when rain water was needed.

Maria always washed her clothes in rain water and one day, when Puggie was playing at a neighbor's, and the other children were at school, Maria started her washing; when suddenly the neighbor's little boy came screaming in to the house: "Oh Miss Biddle, come quick! Puggie's in the cistern! Come quick! Puggie's all wet." Maria's heart almost stopped beating; but she did not lose her presence of mind, and as she ran toward the cistern she called to the boy: "Run as fast as you can to Dr. Henry's and tell him to come here quick! Tell him that Puggie'll die if he can't come quick!": and, as the child ran down the street, Maria got poor little Puggie out of the cistern, and began working with her,—trying to bring back the spark of life in the, apparently, dead child. Dr. Henry was there in a few minutes and did everything he could to revive her. He felt, from the first, that his efforts would be useless; but he stayed nearly an hour before he told Maria that there was nothing more he could do; but Maria pleaded so piteously with him to stay, he remained almost an hour longer; and applied every means he knew for resuscitating the drowned child: but at last he gave up what he considered a hopeless effort, and went to see another sick patient who needed attention. Maria did not blame him for going; but she could not give up her little girl, and kept on working over her with almost superhuman strength. She forced air into the child's lungs and then expelled it,—again and again,—until at last her efforts were rewarded and little Puggie began to breathe naturally.

In the mean time, a number of neighbors had gathered at her house; and they took little Puggie from her exhausted mother and put her to bed. Then they took Maria in hand, and insisted that she too go to bed by the side of the child she had resurrected from the dead. Those kind neighbors finished Maria's washing, and looked after her home while she recovered from the shock of her harrowing experience.

A few weeks later, on August 11th, 1849, Maria gave birth to her third boy, and named him Edwin Weber Biddle. Sarah Weber, Dr. Henry and Angeline were with her; and her kind neighbors seemed to vie with each other in doing everything they could for her, until she was strong and well once more. Maria needed all the love and tenderness they gave her for she was very lonely and sick at heart. For the first time in her life she was feeling the sting of poverty; and the uncertainty of Robert's whereabouts kept her constantly worried and nervous. She was very busy throughout the day and found little time to think about herself and her troubles; but she could not sleep at night;—or when she did sleep she would often wake herself by crying over some terrible dream. Then she would lie in bed, trembling from shock and fright, after the terror of her dream. She had no way of knowing if Robert were alive and safe, or not: and she would think of the reports that had been brought back from the West;—of the immigrants who had been murdered by Indians,—or had died from thirst or cholera.

Her only solace was her faith in prayer:—and she prayed fervently each day, that God, in his infinite goodness and mercy, would guide and protect Robert (and the other Springfield travelers) on their perilous journey. Then she would think of the nearness of God to her and Robert too, even though they were separated by miles of territory and months of travel. That thought always consoled her; but the days and weeks passed slowly; and it would be many months, at best, before she could reasonably expect to receive financial aid from California.

The harvests were poor that year, and the rents and notes remained unpaid. There were many things needed for her little family, and money should be put away for taxes. Robert had always attended to everything of that sort; and it worried her more than she would admit. Her own property was tied up so that she could not get anything from it; and she was unwilling to accept help from her family,—who would have been glad to assist her if they had known of her plight.

At last she decided to have some boarders, as well as roomers. She had her own vegetable garden, cow and chickens,—and occasional meat from the farmers who could not pay their debt, to her, in cash: so she decided that a few boarders would almost pay her running expenses. With five children (and one of them a baby) this was no small undertaking: but “where there's a will there's a way”, and Maria took care of her family without any financial aid from others.

CHAPTER XXIV

Benjamin Robert Biddle, and his party, left home in March, and it was Christmas before any of their families knew that they had reached California,—and where they had located. Then letters came telling of the beautiful spot they had chosen for their new home. They told of the building claims they were taking up on either side of the main trail which led to the Trinity River mines. They said that their location was in the very center of the gold-bearing section of Northern California. They told of the beautiful snow covered mountains to the east; which they had passed after leaving the Oregon trail. The trail had taken them through dense forests and lava beds, infested by hostile Indians: but they had passed through without harm. Parts of the letters were published in the Springfield papers, and proved to be of great interest; for the people were interested in the adventures of their towns-people, who wrote from the California Eldorado.

In a letter, written early in November, 1849, Robert said that they were having rain and that many people were leaving, for fear of a flood; but that the idea of a flood was ridiculous, as they were on high ground and the water drained off almost as fast as it fell: and that Mr. Reading (who had lived there several years) said that rains in November never lasted long,—and that it would be six weeks before the real winter started. That letter reached Maria in February; and she, nor any of the other women, had any word from their husbands again until the first of May.

There was no way of knowing that the men were flood-bound; so they imagined that all kinds of terrible things had happened to them. They talked about their fears to each other, and that made matters worse. They imagined that Indians, from the north-east had gone on the warpath and massacred them all while they slept;—or that their camp had been wiped out by an epidemic of cholera:—or that they might have been drowned in the flood, which some one had written about from San Francisco. So Maria kept on worrying, and her fears affected her health.

She had great confidence in Robert's judgment, in face of danger; and, in her calmer moments, she was sure that he would take care of himself, and would write to her and the boys whenever he could. There was always the possibility that letters had been lost or mis-carried. They might have been given to irresponsible people to mail,—and boats, carrying mail, had been reported lost at sea:—and so she tried to reason with herself and put aside her misgivings.

During the winter the boys had colds; and Puggie and Eddie had attacks of croup,—which she treated with the simple remedies at hand. Her Uncle, Dr. Preston Holt, had given Maria a medical book soon after her marriage, which listed the symptoms of ordinary diseases, and the treatments to be used. It was well indexed and worn by constant use; for, next to the Bible and the Almanac, it was

read more than any other book in the house. She had referred to it so often she knew the symptoms of most of the ordinary diseases of children, and the remedies used for their cure. In fact her knowledge of medicine, and the art of healing, were so well known to her friends, she was frequently called on for advice when any of the neighbors were ill. Most of them had more confidence in her judgment than in that of the local doctors, who had often had less experience than she: but, with all of her skill, the hours of nursing and the worry of caring for sick children were "the straws that broke the camel's back". Taking care of five children, keeping her house in order and cooking for boarders, was hard work when every one was well and the older children could help: but when sickness came and the little ones had to be watched over at night, as well as during the day, it was more than Maria could endure. When Angeline found her feverish and ill, she sent for a doctor; and Maria was ordered to bed. Angeline and Sarah Weber took charge of her home; and, with the help of neighbors who were anxious to serve one who had given so much of herself to them, she was given efficient and loving care while she recovered her health and strength. The doctor warned her that she must quit worrying, get more rest, and take better care of herself if she wanted to keep well and live to raise her children.

It was the first of May, just as she was recovering from this illness, that a letter came from Robert, telling her of the hard winter he had just passed through; and saying that he was sending her a draft for \$300.00 by a friend who was starting for the States that day, and would be apt to reach Springfield before his letter. He said that his business was prospering; and that, as the floods were over and the roads were open once more he would write often and send money frequently.

Robert's letter, containing such good news, acted like a tonic; and Maria's health improved rapidly: but as day after day passed and the draft, or the man who was to bring it, did not reach Springfield, Maria began to worry again. She was no longer able to keep boarders: and, unless she received the money Robert had sent, she did not see how she could live without asking for help from her family in Tennessee.

Finally, one day, a package came from San Francisco; and she thought that Robert had changed his mind and had sent the draft in a box with something else. There was great excitement in their home as the children gathered 'round to watch her unwrap the package, which contained a beautifully decorated (lacquered) box,—unlike anything they had ever seen before. When the box was opened they unwrapped three lovely embroidered shawls that had been made in far off China. The girls were delighted with their white silk shawls, embroidered in delicately colored flowers and edged with heavy white silk fringe. The boys were all excited too when they saw their nuggets of pure gold that Pa had sent from far off California:—but when Maria unfolded her shawl,—her lips trembled

and her eyes filled with tears. She had never seen any needlework that could compare with the fine embroidery on that shawl: and, as she unfolded it and tried it on, it was so large the fringe dragged on the floor as she walked across the room. It was only fit for a tall and stately woman who could show its beauty to advantage. As the children ran out to show their gifts to their friends, Maria fell across the bed and sobbed as though her heart would break:

She was not strong,—and she needed money so desperately! She had expected, each day, to receive the draft Robert had sent: and the expectation had been a stimulant to her, after the months of hard work and worry she had just passed through; but now, instead of the much needed money this beautiful, useless present had come. It must have cost enough to have outfitted the whole family!

As she grew calmer she realized that Robert did not know of her financial difficulties; and that it was his love for her, and his desire to make her happy, that had prompted him to buy such a handsome present. He would never think that it might be too large for her. As she thought of his kindness she smiled through her tears, and wrapped the shawl carefully in oiled tissue and put it away, thinking that perhaps one of their daughters might grow to be tall, like Robert's family, and would be able to wear it with pride and distinction.

All well-dressed women wore shawls, at that time (even men wore heavy woolen ones when it was cold): and Maria had several handsome ones that were suitable for various occasions; and this one was, by far, the most beautiful of them all: but she never wore it as long as she lived. Her daughters too were short women: so the gift that Robert hoped would give her such pleasure lay folded away for sixty years until it fell into the hands of a granddaughter who wore it and loved it, because it had been a gift from the dearest companion of her childhood to the grandmother she adored.

A short time later Maria received the long-looked-for draft:—and from that time on, her financial difficulties were at an end. She continued to receive letters and remittances from Robert quite regularly. His business in California was all that could be desired; but he was getting very anxious to see his family; and, even though they were prospering financially, he and John Weber were planning to sell out and return to Springfield.

They thought that the mines would hold out for another year or two; and they planned to make their profit until the Spring of 1851, when the business should be at its height; and then they hoped to sell out for a good price. He said that a California mining town was not a proper place to bring up a family: but that the state had a great future in agriculture. There were few heavy storms during the winter of 1850-51; and mail came through regularly from the men at Shasta.

Maria felt like her old self again,—happy and contented,—and she sang as she went about her work. She no longer kept any boarders,—although she still rented one room, which gave her enough

extra money to hire Mrs. Brown to do her washing and ironing. The children too were exceptionally well, all during the winter; and toward spring they began to talk about the things they would do "when Pa comes home." He was planning to come home on horseback; so the trip would take less time than it did going West with the ox-teams.

Late in July they received a letter from "Pa," telling about his visit with his sister in Oregon Territory. He was delighted with that country, and the opportunities, offered by the Government, to married men and their wives who would settle there before 1854. He told Maria that he would soon be home, to sell the rest of his property and settle up his affairs; so that he could take his family back there to make a permanent home. Early in September another letter came, written on June 19th, in which he said that he, and a couple of his friends, were starting, overland to Springfield, in a few days; and that he was bringing something that the children would all like.

There was great excitement over the news, and the children wondered what their father could be bringing to them from Oregon. There was no use of guessing, for no one knew if any one guessed right: but they kept right on guessing, and looking for their father to come and satisfy their curiosity. However, they did not expect him home before the middle of October; for even horses can not travel very fast on a two thousand mile trip over roads like the Overland Trail.

Robert had written that, like other men of the West, he was wearing a beard; and the children wondered if they would know him. In fact he had been away so long, the little girls seemed to have forgotten just how he looked: and they studied his old daguerreotypes and talked about his eyes and his smile, and the curl in his hair. The boys remembered, especially, how straight he stood, how fast he walked, and how searchingly he looked at them,—straight in the eyes,—as though he could see their very thoughts:—and they remembered, most of all, how kind he was!

Then, one evening about the middle of September, as Maria and Sarah Weber sat on the porch with their knitting, while they watched the children playing Prisoner's Base in the vacant lot next door, they saw Henry suddenly stop the game and run excitedly down the street, calling: "Ma! Oh Ma! Look quick! Here comes Pa! Here comes Pa!" . . . and then all the children went running down the street to meet him.

It was a very happy reunion; and Maria felt an exhilaration of spirit,—like the return of her lost youth,—as the burden of her family cares slipped from her shoulders, when Robert entered the house. As he unpacked the horses he said to the children: "See this little horse? It is a Cayuse pony. I got it from an Indian in north-western Oregon, to bring home to you. It's very strong and easy to ride. The Indians ride without any saddle or bridle. I can show you how to ride the pony that way. If you will give him a little sugar,

once in awhile, he will follow you all around the place and be a regular pet."

After Pa had eaten his supper, the younger children were put to bed: but Henry and Robert Jr. were allowed to stay up late to listen to their father tell of his adventures in the wonderland where they were all going to make their home. Robert was a fluent and convincing talker: so, by the time they had to go to bed, the boys had a mental picture of their new home in the West that was almost as vivid as if they had seen the place with their own eyes.

Robert said that he and his friends had returned by the Snake River route; but he considered the trail through Northern California and Central Oregon much better and safer. When they reached the Platte River, on the way home, they met a party of eight men, traveling with pack horses, from California, who joined them and traveled with them all the way to St. Joseph. They met occasional bands of Indians; but had no trouble with any of them.

On their trip home they met 685 wagons, 379 families and 2962 head of stock going to Oregon:—which showed how fast the West was filling up. As they passed parties on the road, they always stopped to talk,—to exchange ideas and news of the road. They usually nooned and stopped over night with some of the west bound wagon trains, who were glad to meet people, coming from the West, who could give them reliable information about the roads they would have to travel.

It took Robert, and his friends, just 83 days to make the trip from Oregon City to St. Joseph;—and they laid by seven days on the way: so, as they looked back, it did not seem a very hard trip.

CHAPTER XXV

As soon as his sister, and her husband, from Jacksonville, heard of Robert's return, they came to Springfield to welcome him, to hear all about this trip and experiences in the West, and especially to hear about their sister Harriett.

Mary Cardwell's older sons, James and Byron, were very anxious to try pioneering in the West. They had been half grown boys, twelve years before, when their Aunt Harriett Campbell had gone to Oregon with the Missionaries; and that desire to go with her,—to experience the thrill and excitement of the long, dangerous journey, and to help build up a settlement in the Indian country of the West, had grown with them through the years. They had talked about it so much, the whole Cardwell family had become saturated with the idea of migrating to the Pacific Coast.

In telling of his experiences Robert said: "I think that if I had been willing to stay away from my family, I could have made a fortune at Shasta City, before the mines gave out: but a mining town is no place to take Maria and the children:—and I couldn't stay away from them another year for all of the gold of the West. The Willamette Valley, in Oregon, is a much better place to live. The soil is fertile, the climate ideal, and good schools have already been established. To encourage families to settle in Oregon, the Government is offering 320 acres of land to every man and wife who will go there to live."

Robert told of the home and family of his sister;—and of the advantages a new country offered to young and energetic men. His enthusiasm was contagious: and, before their first evening together was over, they were all planning to start West in the early Spring. Robert said: "Anything will grow in that soil out there; and the climate is so mild fruits and berries of all kinds do well; so I figure to take out enough young fruit trees and berry vines to plant the land I have located, when we reach there next Fall."

James Cardwell, who had always been a student, was very much interested in fruit growing;—even though he had studied Medicine, and had also taken courses in Dentistry and Pharmacy. He said: "Uncle Robert, if so many people are going to Oregon, and fruit trees grow so well there, why wouldn't it be a good idea to take out a whole wagon load of fruit trees and start a nursery?": and Maria said: "I can start some rose slips this Fall, and get some other plants and seeds to take along, and we can have flower gardens around our homes there just as we have here.": And so they talked all the rest of the day,—and far into the second night,—eagerly planning for their new homes in the wonderful territory of Oregon,—far from the social and political problems of "The States."

It took about six months to make the trip with ox teams; and they had to consider getting food and water for the animals along the way. They could buy some grain and hay, which could be used,

for a short time after leaving Independence: but, from there on, they had to depend on the small amount of grain they could carry, and the grass that grew near the trail. Very little grass was high enough for grazing before the first of April:—and yet, if they waited too long, other trains would go before them and take the best of the feed. They also had to remember that, near the end of their journey, high mountains had to be crossed before the snows (which sometimes came in October and November) would close the trails.

They had about six months in which to dispose of their property in Illinois, buy new outfits, and complete their plans for their long journey. This meant leaving their old friends, their homes and relatives,—perhaps forever: but Maria was willing to go, if she could see her family in Tennessee once more before leaving “The States.”

She and Robert, with the children, started almost immediately; so as to be back before the Winter storms. The roads had been greatly improved since they first drove over them, on their wedding journey; but most of her relatives who had lived on the Main Kentucky road were no longer there, and she missed them. They did stop at the homes of her great Uncles, where some of the younger generation still lived; but it seemed like the old people had taken much of the charm of their homes with them, when they had gone: and Maria did not care to stay.

As they went down the Main Street of Tazewell, half of the people they met were related to Maria by blood or marriage; and they were so friendly and so glad to see her and her fine children she felt that she would like to stay among them always. Their old home, where their large family had been so happy together, was still known as the Evans House; but it was being used as a boarding house and looked “run down” and uninviting.

Robert and Maria, with their family, made their headquarters with her brother Hamilton,—where they could be with her mother, who made her home with her oldest son. From there they made short visits to other members of the family; and also stayed a few days with Robert’s brother Charles, in Granger County. Hamilton’s son Henry was about the same age as Henry Biddle; and his little girls were just the right age to enjoy Emma and Puggie.

Gray Garrett had died several years before, and Matilda had married Benjamin Dickinson, a prosperous merchant of Tazewell. Time had dealt kindly with Matilda. She had lost none of her good looks; and carried herself with a grace and dignity that added greatly to her attractiveness. She had a number of slaves who, under her efficient management, kept her home one of the most attractive in the community. Her only child, Henry Garrett, was quite a young man and was studying law in his uncle’s office.

Sarah Evans had married John Easley, and lived at Thorn Hill, a short distance from Evans’ Bridge, where Maria could see her, and her family, often.

Laura was Mrs. William Kirkpatrick and lived at Morristown: but it was a hard trip for her to bring her little girls over the steep

mountain road to Evans' Inn; so Maria had only a short visit with her when Robert visited his brother, and took her on to Morristown.

Dear little Lucy was as pretty and dainty as ever, but she had grown more delicate. She had had four children in six years; and the two youngest had died that year: so she had been ill and discouraged, until the excitement of seeing her favorite sister had made her forget her grief. Her husband, William Epps, was a successful tailor; and they had two handsome children named Edward and Sarah.

Lafayette who, after his father's death, had asked the court to name Robert Biddle his guardian, and had spent much time with Maria in Illinois, was now twenty-five years old and married: and "little William" was a highly educated young man of twenty-one, with decided ideas of his own.

It had been several years since Maria had seen her family at Tazewell: but, as she met them all again, and noted the many changes that had taken place, life seemed very uncertain; and she felt that she could not go so far away and leave them, as she had planned; for she might never see any of them again: and she loved them all so much she wanted to be near them always. Her mother, and all the rest of the family, tried to dissuade her and Robert from going so far away. Her mother said: "I oughtn't to complain, for few mothers keep their children as near by as I have: and I wouldn't mind so much if you would stay near enough to come home every three or four years; but I'm gettin' old now, and if you go 'way out there I'll never see you, or your little ones, again. Your Grandpaw and your Grandmaw never onest went back to Virginy after they all came to Tennessee."; and Robert replied: "Times have changed since then. Now, that so many people are going West, good roads will soon be built across the plains:—and over the deserts and mountains, and into the valleys of the Pacific Coast. It won't be long before the people who go out there to make their fortunes can drive back in their carriages, in comfort. It took me less than three months to come back from Oregon City to Springfield, on horseback,—over roads that were little better than trails. Someday there will be a railroad all the way across, and then we can make the trip in two or three weeks. Even now a railroad is being built across the Isthmus of Panama: so it will be only a short time before we can take a boat from Oregon City, and Fort Vancouver, to Panama. Then we can cross the Isthmus on the train, and get another boat to take us northwest on the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, to the Mississippi River, then up the Mississippi and Tennessee Rivers to Knoxville. We might come home, that way, in a couple of years, to make you a visit. Since spending over two years in California, where people are always on the move, I realize more than ever before how easy it is to travel. I feel sure, if our plans are successful, that we will come back to visit you in two or three years. That will not seem long; for time flies when we are busy." Robert talked convincingly, but Maria had neither his optimism nor his imagination; and, like her mother, feared that she would never be able to return to her old home again:

but she pretended to agree with her husband, and spoke of the time when they would return and put their boys in College at Jacksonville or Knoxville if the slavery problem was settled by that time.

The slavery problem was ever before them. Every newspaper contained notices of runaway slaves,—with descriptions of them and of the reward offered for their return. Yankees were traveling through the South, stirring up trouble among the slaves and abusing their owners. The Evans family all agreed that slavery, as an institution, was wrong: but they believed that it was a matter that could, and should, be regulated by the States themselves, and was no concern of the Federal Government. They believed that the Tennessee laws should be changed, so that the negroes could buy their freedom and continue to live in their home State. Some of the slaves were allowed to keep part of the money they earned, when they “worked out”; so that they could buy their freedom, as soon as the State law would make it possible. Each slave’s money was kept in a separate package, in a tin box, that fitted behind a brick in the storehouse wall.

The slaves, themselves, did not seem very anxious to be free;—and planned to stay on and work for the family just as they always had done; but there would be one advantage:—and that was that they could never be sold to a Yankee,—or other bad man, if their owners should die or become financially involved.

The American ancestors of the Evanses had always believed that each State had a right to make its own laws and settle its own problems: and their Tennessee descendants held the same opinion. Robert and Maria had adopted another point of view after living in the Free State of Illinois for twelve years: where fugitive slaves, from Missouri and the South, were always causing trouble and misunderstandings between the peace-officers of the States they had left, and the sympathetic people of Illinois, would have liked to help the miserable, hunted wretches,—who asked nothing but to be saved from an avenging, and sometimes brutal, master.

They thought that the only way to settle the question was by an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and an appropriation of money to reimburse the slave owners for their loss.

Robert was the one who expressed these ideas; for, although Maria agreed with all he said, she did not take part in the discussions. She listened attentively, and as the arguments became heated her right foot patted the floor, like a musician beating time to the rhythm of a dance. Then as the discussion grew fiercer, the rhythmic beating of her foot grew faster, as though it sought to keep time with the wild beating of her heart, which was in accord with the fierce (though controlled) emotions of those about her.

That night, when they went to their room, she said to Robert: “I’m sure we’ll be happy in Oregon, where we’ll not hear any more about slavery, and State’s Rights, and Constitutional Amendments, until these problems have been settled for good.”

CHAPTER XXVI

On their journey home, to Springfield from Tazewell, the children could talk of nothing but the good times they had had, while visiting their relatives. Henry would say: "I had the best time at Uncle Ham's, where there were so many people coming and going all the time. And then there was Cousin Henry, who could always think of something new to do every day. I liked my cousin Henry Evans a lot; and am glad you called me Henry. Aunt Minerva was mighty nice too; and always made us all feel that she was glad to have us there:—And Grandma was there too; and she'd tell us stories about Indians,—and all the things that used to happen to her when she was a little girl, when our great-grandfather and great-grandmother were pioneers, and lived in a log house. Things must have been queer then! But it was exciting, and the children must have had more fun then than they do now. Grandma always sat, in her chair, at the side of the big fire-place; and talked to us about what children our age did when she was young: and then, in the evening, she would talk about Grandpa, and tell us what a wonderful man he used to be. She said that, some way, he always seemed to be near when she sat by the fire-place, just before evening prayers. I wish I could remember Grandpa."

Robert Jr. said: "Of course it was nice at Uncle Ham's, and the Inn; but I liked it best at Aunt Till's. She always looked so grand in her black silk dresses,—that rustled when she walked. And the big bunch of keys that she kept on a chain, fastened to her belt, always looked so important! The store room and the cupboards, where she kept her best china and silver, were always locked; and no one could get anything until she unlocked the doors." Emma interrupted by saying: "I don't think Aunt Till is as pretty as Aunt Lucy, 'cause Aunt Lucy has yellow hair and blue eyes, and looks just like an angel. Then Edward and Sarah were such fun to play with! I liked to stay there better than any place."

Then Robert Jr. spoke up and said: "I thought that Aunt Lucy looked like a picture of an angel too; but Aunt Till looks like a picture of a great lady. She said that I was more like the Evanses than any of you; and that I would make a good lawyer or doctor. She said that, when I get old enough, she wants me to come back and live at her house, and study in the office of one of our uncles in Tazewell; and then, she said, I could go back to Oregon and be a man of importance. Her boy Henry is going to be a lawyer; and I'd like to be like him. Did you know that Aunt Till smokes a pipe? She doesn't smoke very much; but you ought to see the leather case she keeps her tobacco in! When she opens it up it's a good size bag; and then she can give it a funny little twist, and it will flatten down and look just like a big leather coin,—only much bigger."

Robert Sr. had never approved of the use of tobacco in any form; and it was hard for him to refrain from making unkind comments

about the Tennessee relatives, as the boys talked about the pipes and tobacco belonging to members of the family: but nearly all of the older people, and many of the younger ones, of rural Tennessee, used tobacco in some form. He had noticed that his brother's wife and mother-in-law smoked pipes,—and snuff was quite generally used. So he made no comment except when he said: "We must remember that social customs are largely a matter of Geography. In some countries people wear rings through their noses. In China where much rice is grown, the people almost live on rice. On the coast of New England, where there is so much fishing, everyone eats cod fish; and in the South, where most of the world's tobacco is grown, it is quite natural that the people should use tobacco, even though it is not good for them. Smoking is not as bad as chewing;—and most of the men, and many of the women, of the South chew tobacco. Some way, to me, a woman is no longer a lady when she sits in her chair and spits tobacco juice in the fireplace, or in a spittoon, or on the ground,—or any other place. We all know that people are better off if they never use tobacco in any form; and I hope that none of you will ever use it at all." Robert Jr. replied: "Oh Pa, I don't think any of us would ever want to use tobacco; for it doesn't look the same at home; but I did just love to watch Aunt Till smoke at Tazewell. Everything about her was kind of grand,—even the row of shining brass candlesticks that stood, in a line, on her mantle over the great fire-place. I'd like to stay there and study law, when I get old enough."

Little Puggie chirped up and said: "I liked Aunt Sarah best of all, 'cause she laughed so much, and gave us all such good cookies, when I went there to play. She let me ride the pony and the cow: and I'd like to stay there." Henry laughed and said: "I still think Uncle Ham's place was the nicest and most interesting for a big boy like me. He and Aunt Minerva always make everybody have such a good time! Cousin Mary and Henry and I could ride the horses whenever we wanted to. I never had such a good time, anyplace, before; and I'll remember the things we did and the fun we had there, as long as I live. I think it's grand to have a lot of slaves to do all the work, and look after everything, like they have. The slaves seem to be happy too. When we'd go over to their cabins at night, they'd always be singing and dancing and having a good time. They didn't have to work very hard, and always seemed to enjoy doing things to please the folks. Slavery isn't anything like the folks in Illinois think it is."

Maria did not say much as they rode along toward Springfield. She listened to the chatter of the children and thought about the happy days she had had with her family. She feared that she might never see them again; but she had wonderful memories, to carry with her to her new home in the West,—which she could cherish always.

The next five months were busy ones for the Biddle family. The children had to go to school, and also continue with the chores that had been assigned to them while their father was away; for he was too busy, settling his affairs, to take time for his usual work around the home.

All of his property had to be sold; and all outstanding notes and bills collected; for moving a family to the West Coast, and getting them settled in a new home, would be a great expense. The proper preparation for such a trip required much time and careful planning;—and Robert was continually interrupted by callers who wanted to know about California and Oregon;—and the opportunities offered there to home-seekers.—etc.

The idea of migrating to the west seemed to be in the air; and there had been so much said about the wealth of the mines, the fertility of the soil, and the mildness of the climate, it seemed as if every one wanted to pull up stakes and start for the west.

Maria soon knew that a new baby would be due, in their family, long before they could reach Oregon the next year: but Robert assured her that she could have as good care, along the trail, as she could at home. Dr. Henry, their family physician, was to be one of the party: and Aunt Mary, and another woman whose husband was planning to go in their party, were excellent midwives and nurses. Then, too, he was buying a closed carriage, or hack, in which Aunt Mary, Maria and the younger children, could ride in comfort,—and style.

They planned to ship most of their furniture, by freight, around the Horn; so that it would arrive in Oregon in the late Summer or Fall. The entire space, in one wagon, would be used for the nursery stock. Robert and James Cardwell made wooden trays (which would fit in the wagon like movable shelves) in the Fall of 1851; and filled them with fine black loam, in which cuttings and young trees were placed; so that they could take root and remain alive through-out the long trip across the plains. James Cardwell, who was then twenty-one years old, was to drive that wagon and take care of the nursery stock.

It would take two other wagons to hold their food, tents, bedding, and other equipment for the six months trip. Those wagons were built out at the sides; so that beds could be made under their waterproof covers, in case heavy storms prevented them from using their tents. They decided to use six oxen for each wagon, and four mules for the carriage. They planned, also, to take two riding horses, three yoke of extra oxen, one extra mule, two cows and the children's Cayuse pony.

Time passed rapidly; and almost before they were ready, it was time for them to start on their long trek.

CHAPTER XXVII

Spring came early in the year 1852, and the grass was high enough for the stock to feed on by the first of April: and by the fifth of the month the Biddles were ready to start on their great adventure.

Their home had been sold; everything was packed, and they spent their last night, in Springfield, with the Webers. John Weber wished that he could take his family, with the others, who were going back to the Coast; but he had good property in Illinois; and pioneering was difficult for a man with only one hand.

A number of their friends, besides Dr. Henry and his family, were going with the party. Among them were Isaac Constant (who had lived on a farm near Springfield), his wife Lucinda and their children, Levinia (18), Tom (16), Elizabeth (15), Julia, Margery and baby Alice: William Merriman (a brother of Lucinda Constant) with his invalid wife Mary and two small children: Charles Halsted: George Eastman: Hiram Bristol and others. They expected to take a certain boat from St. Louis to Independence: but were unable to get their supplies delivered in time; so they had to wait several days, in St. Louis, for the next boat. The delay seemed like a tragedy, at the time; but later they found that they had been very fortunate; for the boat they had hoped to take was blown up in the middle of the river; and everything was lost, except a few passengers who managed to swim to shore,—or were saved from the wreckage.

When their party reached Independence, and got their stock and wagons ready for the start, they found that they had forty-five wagons, beside two carriages (or hacks), riding horses, extra oxen, mules, cows, and other stock: so they divided into two parties, with Isaac Constant Captain of one party and Robert Biddle Captain of the other.

It was the first of May before the parties were thoroughly organized; and, the first day from Independence, they only tried to make eight miles to the Methodist Shawnee Mission. The members of the parties who thought only of the two thousand miles between them and their destination, had to curb their impatience and accept the slow, monotonous tread of their strong, sluggish oxen, as the speed at which the whole caravan must move. To many that first eight miles of adjustment was the most difficult of the whole trip; but it was in reality their very best piece of road; and Robert and Isaac Constant (who were seasoned emigrants) were delighted with the fine animals and equipment they had selected, and with the progress they were making.

The children, who could ride horses, had the time of their lives. Even when they had to seek shelter, in a freight wagon from the thunder storm, they laughed and imagined themselves story-book-children in a land of romance and adventure.

Mary Merriman had been in poor health for more than a year before her husband decided to join this party and take his family to Oregon Territory. Many of her friends feared that she was not strong enough to endure the hardships of the journey; but their physician advised Mr. Merriman to take her to the mild western climate, for he did not expect any improvement if she remained in Springfield another winter. The Constants also had a hack for their women and younger children to ride in; and arranged for her to ride with them,—with pillows piled about her, to make her comfortable.

She seemed to enjoy the excitement of the trip to St. Louis, and up the Missouri River by boat: so every one thought that her health was improving; but she was very tired after that first day's journey out of Independence.

When the Mission people learned that there was a sick woman in the party, that had stopped to make camp, they offered to make a bed for her in the house: but Mary Merriman refused to be pampered, and said that she must get used to sleeping in the wagon. She had her own feather bed and was sure she would be comfortable; so she drank a cup of fresh milk and was asleep before dark. Toward morning, when the baby cried, Will Merriman put his hand on his wife's forehead,—and it was very cold. Dr. Henry came to see her,—but she slept peacefully on.

Her death was a shock to every member of both parties; and they all waited at the Mission, while Robert and Will Merriman went back to Independence to buy a casket. Her wedding dress was found tucked away in a trunk,—among the treasures she could not leave behind. Perhaps she had a premonition that she might need it.—Maria, and her sister-in-law dressed her tenderly: and, as she lay in her casket at the Mission she looked like a lovely bride. She was buried, with Christian Ceremony, in a grave within the Mission walls.

That afternoon the loads, in the wagons were rearranged; and plans were made for traveling with greater safety and efficiency,—for they were entering the "Indian country", and their road ran through the woods, toward the distant hills.

Robert and Isaac Constant were intelligent men who had had enough traveling experience to make them experts in planning this trip. They each secured carriages for the comfort of their women and small children; and before they left Springfield, they each bought new cooking stoves (to be used in their new homes in the West) that would fit into the backs of their wagons, in such a way that they could be let down on the ground, when they made camp,—to be used for cooking their meals. They planned to stop for rest each Sunday, and also to stay in camp one day each week; so that the women could cook and wash and mend; and the men could repair their harness and wagons, and keep all of their equipment in first class condition. The stock too seemed to need two days of rest each week; and, in the end, they made as good (and perhaps better) time than if they had been overworked. The travelers had plenty of good,

wholesome food; and their wagon covers were waterproof. Whenever they stopped to make camp, the children hunted for dandelions or other plants that could be cooked for "greens".

The deep wagon beds were made watertight and could be blocked up whenever they had to ford streams that were unusually deep. Like most emigrants, each family had its own cow; so they had plenty of fresh milk. Each morning the cream, from the evening's milk was put into a jar; and the jolting of the wagon, as it bumped along the rough road, made the cream into butter before noon,—and also furnished fresh buttermilk for their noonday meal.

Besides the stove, Maria also took her Dutch-oven for extra baking; and, if they were late in making camp, they need not take the stove out of the wagon; for they could cook over a campfire and bake in the Dutch-oven. When Maria left Springfield, she took a crock of "sponge"; and each evening she made rolls or bread, which would raise, during the night, and be ready for baking, in time for breakfast, the next morning. She always left a small amount of the bread mixture in the crock, to which she added salt, sugar, flour and water, for the next day's "sponge". On Saturday night the batter was made thin for Sunday morning's pancakes. On their baking days the women tried to bake enough light bread and dried fruit pies to last through the week. They had large quantities of dried, smoked and salted meat to supply them until they reached Oregon: but they supplemented it with fresh meat and fish as often as possible. The men fished and hunted at every opportunity; and those who rode at the head of the train frequently shot wild game that sprang up near the trail, as they approached.

There was plenty of feed for the stock as long as they followed the Kansas River;—which they crossed a short distance west of the Methodist Swanee Mission,—and followed, in a north-westernly direction, along the north-eastern bank of the river, to St. Mary's Mission. The Kansas River Valley was the home of the How Indians, who were lazy sneak-thieves and had to be watched constantly: but they gave the travelers no trouble beyond the fear they inspired. Robert had had experience with them before, and gave them some salt pork,—which made them quite friendly. In fact they were almost too friendly for the comfort of the emigrants.

The party turned north into the valley of the Little Blue, on their way to Fort Kerney near the Platte River. There they came into deep sand; that seemed to have no bottom when it was wet: and they continued to have rain and hail storms that saturated the sand until it was so soft and slippery the oxen could scarcely drag the wagons through;—but they had to keep going. All, except the more delicate women and small children, had to walk,—so as to lighten the loads. The men had to walk beside the oxen to encourage them and urge them on. Sometimes the wheels mired down so deep, the wagons had to be unpacked while the men dug down and pried out the wheels. Robert had been very careful to have his wagon

covers waterproofed; but many of the other wagons leaked; and flour, and other food supplies, were ruined.

Notwithstanding the rain and hardships, the members of the party were all in good health; which they ascribed, largely, to Dr. Henry's watchfulness. He told them that their health must be their first consideration: for it was only the able-bodied who could hope to do their share of the work and survive.

The party followed the Valley of the South Platte to the ford, where they went into camp, preparatory to crossing the river the next day. Although the river was swollen from recent rains, they were told that it was low enough to cross with safety,—but that the bed of the river was covered with quicksand; and that the animals would have to be hurried across to prevent them from miring down and drowning.

The next morning the stock, not needed for the crossing, were driven across the river; and all reached the opposite side except one cow which refused to be hurried. In the mean time, eight of the best oxen were taken over to an island, past the main channel of the river, and yoked to a long cable, or rope, which was securely fastened to each wagon, as it was taken across. Twelve oxen were yoked to the wagon itself;—the bed of which had been raised two feet, and was watertight. A skilled driver was on the seat of each wagon, to handle the team as best he could,—while other men rode, or swam their horses at the side of the oxen, to urge them on. A number of men were used to handle the oxen on the island,—and also those on the opposite bank of the river.

Twenty oxen, four horses, and more than a dozen men were needed to get each wagon across the river; so it took two whole days, working early and late, to get the entire party over. It was slow, wet, strenuous work:—nerve-racking, back-breaking work: but no one was seriously hurt; and they lost only one of their oxen,—which broke its leg and had to be killed.

The animal had been in perfect health; so its throat was cut, and its flesh was used for food. The meat was very tough; but, when well cooked, was a welcome change in their diet.

Crossing the South Platte, at that ford, was the worst river crossing the emigrants had to make on their whole trip: and, owing to the nervous exhaustion, physical fatigue and minor injuries suffered by man and beast, it was several days before they were sufficiently rested and well enough to resume their journey. Maria was most effected; for the fright of crossing the treacherous river in the carriage with her children; the worry over the safety of her husband, sons and nephews, during those two strenuous days, had so exhausted her, Dr. Henry ordered her to bed; and told Robert to keep her there as long as they stopped in camp.

The Constant party decided to stay near the river a few days longer; but the time of Maria's confinement was near at hand; and Robert was anxious to reach a more sheltered place.

As they left their camp they followed the trail ten or fifteen

miles to the top of the elevated triangle that separated the North from the South Platte:—and suddenly came to the top of the hill,—where the ground seemed to sink in front of them, and the panorama of the plains—the Valley of the North Platte—, was opened before them. They had traveled several hours over the sandy, lupine covered hills; and suddenly, down in front of them, almost 500 feet below, was a wooded dell, dotted with cedar and ash trees, near the bank of the winding river:—but the paths (called roads), leading down the precipitous sides of the rocky ravine, looked so perilous the party waited at the top, while the men debated which path to take.

After carefully examining the different trails, one was selected as the best;—although none of them could be considered safe.

Every one, except a driver for each wagon, got out and walked down. The oxen and mules, except the wheelers, which were necessary for guiding vehicles, were driven down first to test the road bed. The front and back wheels of the wagons were roped firmly together, after the brakes had been set,—so that the wheels could not turn. Cables were then fastened, from the back axles, to cedar trees, to help hold the wagons and keep them from sliding on top of the animals that were guiding them. When, at last, they reached the bottom and safety, they found that one mule had been injured so badly it had to be killed: and not one member of the party had escaped without some cuts, scratches or bruises to remind him of the dangerous descent.

Maria had tried to help little Eddie scramble down the wall of the gorge; and had lost her footing,—and slid down nearly fifty feet, through brush and over rocks and sand, to the bottom. Through it all she had held on to little Eddie and saved him, with her own body, from harm.

CHAPTER XXVIII

"Ash Hollow" was an ideal camp ground, nestled in a wooded glen, sheltered from the wind, and watered by a stream that flowed down from the ravine. Lupins and red clover, wild roses and choke berries grew in the underbrush and around the great ash trees that gave the place its name. Robert put Maria's feather bed in the wagon, where she and little Eddie could sleep in comfort: while he pitched a tent on the ground, near by, where he and the other four children could spend the night in comfort. Mary Cardwell brought her bed and insisted on putting it in the wagon by Maria, so that she could minister to her if she were ill during the night.

The sand flies, flees and mosquitoes were so bad they could not sleep! Toward morning Maria asked that Robert be called. Just before day light the late sleepers, near the Biddle wagon, were awakened by the lusty cry of a new born child. A few moments later Mary Cardwell had the little boy washed and dressed; and had placed him, beside his mother, in her bed.

The children were all delighted with the baby; but were sorry that it was not a girl, so that it could have been called "Alice", for Mrs. Constant's baby, to whom they had become very much attached. But, as the little stranger, born in an emigrant train hundreds of miles from civilization, was a boy he was named Arthur Platte Biddle, in memory of one of their friends, and of the river that flowed quietly past his birthplace in the wilderness.

As Maria lay exhausted, on the feather bed in the covered wagon, with the baby held close in her arms, she could hear the murmur of the river as it flowed toward the sea: and the panorama of her life seemed to pass before her as in a dream. She could hear her indulgent father and her Aunt Mary;—whose desire had always been to give her every luxury that money could buy;—who had tried to grant her every wish, and had furnished her with slaves to dress her and comb her hair and wait upon her;—who had tried to prevent her from marrying Robert, for fear he could not always give her the best that life could offer:—and it seemed to her that she could hear them say: "We were afraid that something like this would happen." Then suddenly Maria was wide awake; and knew that she was very happy and felt no regret; for she knew that she would have married Robert, even if she could have looked into the future and have seen all of the happenings of the years that had led up to that moment in the camp at Ash Hollow: for she still loved him and knew that she always would. He was more intelligent, more resourceful and more interesting than any one else she had ever known. His greatest fault (and his greatest asset) was his tireless energy. It was that energy, plus an enquiring mind and fertile imagination, that made him restless and unwilling to settle down to the humdrum life of an ordinary business man, with a family to support. These traits also made life with him interesting, even though the future might sometimes seem uncertain.

Although she was far from the comforts of home, and the mosquitoes sang, the flies buzzed and the fleas hopped (and they all bit) Maria had no fear of the future. She believed in her husband and his dreams, and was sure that he would not fail her: and, as she held the baby tighter in her arms, she was strangely happy: and offered up a simple prayer of thanksgiving for her husband and children, and the many blessings He had bestowed upon her.

They stayed at Ash Hollow three days; and the stock rested while the men repacked the wagons, mended the harness and overhauled the entire equipment. They also did some fishing, and brought in their first buffalo. The women washed and cooked, as they always did when they stopped in camp: and the children found a few wild berries,—that were made into a pie; and each child had a taste,—which was a treat, as far as it went. For protection, if they became separated, each member of the party had a whistle, that hung from his neck by a rawhide string. If any one should get lost, or be in danger, the shrill shriek of his whistle would be a call for help; so the children (if several of them stayed together) were allowed to go short distances from the camp in search of wood, greens, berries,—and eggs of the larger birds (such as prairie hens or quail), which were a great delicacy.

The whistles they wore could be heard some distance; and gave the wearers a sense of security,—which was demonstrated one day when three of the children came upon an Indian, crouching in the underbrush, near the camp. One of the frightened children immediately blew a long blast on his whistle; which scared the Indian so, he disappeared almost instantly, and was out of sight before the men, with their guns, could reach them.

The party had no real trouble with the Indians during the entire trip; but they used every precaution against an attack. In the late afternoon, when they made camp, they hobbled the most adventurous of their animals, and turned them all out to graze; while the wagons were driven into a circle, which made an inclosure, or corral, into which the livestock was usually driven before dark,—to protect it from outlaws and Indians. There were also men on guard every night, who had only to blow their whistles, or fire a gun, to rouse the whole camp. Large, well equipped parties were seldom attacked; for Indians did not molest emigrant trains unless they were reasonably sure their assault would be successful. Many Indians visited their camp, looked into their wagons, noted the number of their men and the condition of their stock,—offered to trade or sell them something, and then went away.

The afternoon before the B. R. Biddle party left Ash Hollow, the Isaac Constant party came in and made camp. The members of the two parties had much to talk about; and the girls were delighted to find Maria with her new baby. That night they all joined together, in a reunion, around a camp fire, where they gossiped and sang songs until bed time,—when William Merriman led them in prayer. The next morning at dawn, the Biddle caravan continued

its journey westward. The two parties often nooned, or camped near the same place, after that; but, for greater speed and efficiency, they always traveled separately. As they went through the North Platte Valley they came to dryer and more desolate country: and, as Maria had not entirely regained her strength, the constant jolting of the carriage over the rough trail, while she held her tiny baby in her arms, was very tiring. Robert had made a cradle, from an empty box, that fitted between the seats of the carriage: but the jolting seemed to disturb the baby, and he would cry to be nursed. After nursing him, Maria would continue to hold him, for he slept better in her arms than in the cradle. Little Arthur Platte seemed to be always hungry; and Mary Cardwell insisted that Maria should have more food and rest; so that she might have more and better milk for her baby: but it was hard for Maria, who always felt such contempt for lazy people, to lie in bed and have special food, while other women, in the camp, were doing more than their share of the work.

As they climbed to higher altitudes the nights became colder, and the thunder storms more frequent and severe. The day they reached Deer Creek they had one of the worst storms of the whole trip. It first sounded like a battle of distant artillery, which drew nearer and nearer until the reverberations shook the very ground beneath them. The sky grew suddenly dark,—with streaks of lightning zigzagging across the west:—and then there was a deafening clap of thunder and a blaze of light, as a near by tree was struck by lightning. It seemed as if the heavens above had suddenly opened and let down a torrent of hail stones the size of marbles. The stock, crazed by fear, stampeded in every direction; while the women and children crouched under the shelter of the canvas wagon tops. Even the men dared not venture out while the storm was at its height. By night the wind had reached the velocity of a gale. As tent pegs would not have held against the fury of the storm, in the water soaked ground, all beds had to be made in the wagons: and supper, that night, consisted of dried meat, bread and butter,—with melted hail to drink.

It took two days to round up the stock, after the storm; but they were finally all brought in, except one steer, which had evidently been struck by lightning,—and one mule which had disappeared entirely. The day after the storm the air was clear and dry; so, while the men were out looking for the stock, the women took the soiled clothes down to the creek to wash. They first dipped them into the water, and then laid them down, one at a time, on a clean, flat rock, where they were soaped; and then patted with a smooth, wooden paddle until the soap had penetrated every part of the fabric. Then each garment was dipped into clear water and rinsed. That was the way Indian women washed; and the emigrants found it very satisfactory.

When they stopped at Sweetwater Camping Spot, the men and children climbed up on Independence Rock, to read the names that

had been carved there by the people who had passed that way. Robert looked at the autographs with scorn and said: "‘Fool’s names and fool’s faces are always seen in public places’; but the name of the man who does things worthwhile is printed on the pages of history and in the hearts of his fellow men; and he does not have to write it himself in order to be remembered.": so none of the Biddles or Cardwells carved their names on the rock that stood as a memorial to the travelers who had passed that way.

Then came South Pass and the Continental Divide, with an elevation of 7500 feet: but the climb had been so gradual, and the land seemed so level, the emigrants could not realize they had reached the summit until they came to Pacific Springs,—from which flowed a tiny brooklet, called Pacific Creek, whose waters ran in a southwesternly direction, and eventually reached the Pacific Ocean.

That was a great day of rejoicing, for most of the travelers felt that the worst of the journey was behind them. For over 900 miles the straining animals had pulled the heavily laden wagons toward this pass,—through dust and sand and mud, over uncharted roads, or rough and rocky trails. In rain or snow, or blistering heat of noonday sun, they had struggled on from St. Joseph, Missouri, to South Pass. The emigrants, except the small children and those who were ill, had walked a great part of that distance. Every able-bodied traveler had had it impressed upon him that it was his duty to lighten the load of his own weight on all up grade pulls,—and over all other difficult parts of the road. Maria and Mary Cardwell, with their small children, rode, in the carriage drawn by four stout mules, most of the way: but they too were glad when they reached the "top of the Continent", and could start following the streams that ran, on the other side of the Divide, toward the Pacific Coast.

They stopped at Fort Bridger to replenish their supplies; and bought flour, salt, potatoes, honey, etc., etc. They also bought some grain and bran for the stock. While prices at the Fort were high, they could buy food stuffs there almost as cheaply as at Salt Lake, near which most of it was produced. After leaving Fort Bridger they followed the Bear River Valley to Soda Springs. This valley was a veritable Paradise when compared to most of the country through which they had traveled since leaving St. Joseph: and their spirits rose as they rode through the beautiful valley of clear water, tall grass, sheltering trees and dry wood for their camp fires. It is true there were some mosquitoes; but they seemed less fierce and hungry than those of the Platte River country.

Soda Springs, in the midst of a grove of cedars and near a stream of clear, cold water, was an ideal camping place. The springs themselves, issued from the tops of conical mounds about twenty feet high, and more than a hundred feet in diameter at the base. The water was highly charged with carbonic acid gas; and, when flavored with some lemon syrup, that Robert had brought for that very purpose, was the greatest luxury of the whole trip.

They had not finished making camp, when the Isaac Constant party came in and prepared to camp near by. It was a happy reunion; and the groups remained there together for two days before pushing on to Fort Hall, on the Snake River. At Fort Hall they met a party of miners returning from California, in an effort to escape an epidemic of cholera, which was "killing people like flies": and they told harrowing tales of the disease stricken emigrants they had passed on the trail, as they hurried eastward.

Robert had intended to go to Oregon by way of the California trail that turned directly west near the present town of Winnemucca, which he had traveled over when he went to California in 1849. The road into Oregon that connected with that one, near Goose Lake, was fairly good. He had been over each trail; and considered the one, by way of California, much better and safer than the Snake River route: but, after hearing the miner's account of sickness along the California trail, he decided not to risk taking his family that way:—but to continue along the Snake River, and enter Oregon from the north-east.

After leaving Fort Hall the Biddle and Constant parties camped and nooned together, as they traveled along, near the south bank of the Snake River, until they reached the mouth of the Raft river,—where their trails separated. There they met friendly Indians, who brought them fresh and smoked salmon; which was a great treat to the emigrants,—most of whom had never seen that kind of fish before.

The party was reorganized at that point; and those who were going to California or Southern Oregon followed Isaac Constant up the Raft River to the California trail: while the Biddles, the Cardwells, the Henrys, and others who planned to settle in the Willamette Valley, continued along the south bank of the Snake River.

CHAPTER XXIX

Robert had been over this trail in July of 1851, little more than a year before: and, while he preferred the route the Isaac Constant party had taken, the Snake River route had not seemed as bad, when he went over it on horseback, as it did when traveling with the slow ox-teams.

They all suffered from the heat during the day. The animals plodded along in a great cloud of dust, as the emigrants moved westward, parallel with the south bank of the Snake. The air was dry, and the hot sun made their covered wagons seem like moving furnaces:—but they could bear the heat, as long as they had water to drink. They filled their water jugs and barrels at every spring or stream; but many of the creeks and springs had dried up, and the water supply ran low. During the light of the moon they did most of their traveling at night, when they were less affected by the heat. One of the ironies of their fate was that, during the long hot days, while they suffered from heat and thirst, they could look over a perpendicular bank of solid rock and see the cool, inaccessible water of the Snake River, a hundred feet below.

Once, when they had had no water for a day and a half, young Robert, who was light and agile, had himself lowered by a rope, over the cliff to the river below. There he filled buckets with the precious water; and they were drawn up to the top of the cliff, where it was used to quench the thirst of the emigrants, to keep their nursery plants from dying, and to give, just a sip, to each head of stock. Getting that water was a slow, dangerous task:—and the amount was so inadequate for their needs! But, on a trek across the continent in 1852, men (and women too) risked their lives and considered it only a part of the day's work.

After leaving their friends at Raft River, the Biddle Party kept on the south side of the Snake River for about 160 miles, until they came to a place (now called Glenn's Ferry) where the trail crossed to the north side. At that place the river was about 200 yards wide; and they used the same methods they had used when they had crossed the South Platte. The river was deeper than the Platte had been, and some of the smaller animals had to swim: but the entire company made the crossing without a single mishap. A couple of nights later, on the 12th of August, Rev. Jesse Moreland's party from Carlinville, Illinois, camped near them. Several of their old friends, from Carlinville, were with the party; and they all spent a pleasant evening together.

The next day they reached Fort Boise, near the mouth of the Boise River, where they had to cross the Snake River for the second, and last time. The road leading down to the river was narrow, rocky and steep; so they tried to use the same system, for handling the wagons, they had used so successfully on the grade going down to Ash Hollow. The carriage and the first wagons reached the

river safely; but, when the nursery wagon was about half way down, the cable, fastened to the back of the wagon, broke; and the wagon plunged forward on the oxen, and then turned over several times as it rolled down the side of the palisade. James Cardwell, who was driving, was fortunate to escape with his life: but their precious nursery stock was either buried in the debris, at the bottom of the cliff, or floated down with the current, before they could reach it. It was said, a number of years later, that numerous trees grew along the banks of the Snake River, below that ford, that were unknown to that part of the country; and had, no doubt been a part of the Biddle nursery stock.

The loss of their nursery stock was a real tragedy to the Biddles and Cardwells; for they had planned their whole life, in Oregon, around the establishment of their nursery. Maria still had her box of seeds; so they could have a few flowers and vegetables,—melons and seedling fruit trees in the gardens of their new homes. They were philosophical, and thankful that no one had been killed;—and that it was not the wagon containing their food or bedding, that turned over on the grade:—for they still had the necessities of life for their onward journey.

They followed the Powder River to the divide, always watching the Blue Mountains from the time they were only a hazy line on the western horizon until they grew in size and detail to fill the travelers with wonder and dread. From a distance the atmosphere covered these mountains with a beautiful curtain of blue mist, that made them look cool and refreshing to the weary wayfarers who had suffered so much from heat and dust and thirst. There had been times when the desert sand had been so deep, and the dust so thick, none but the leaders of the caravan could see the trail. Although they tried to keep all food covered, the sand had sifted through the containers and permeated everything they possessed. Their throats and nostrils had been inflamed from breathing the dust; and many of them had had colds and stubborn coughs that threatened to develop into pneumonia. Maria said that her nose “ran like a sugar tree”; and the rest of them were no better: but, as they came to the last lap of their journey, they hoped that their trials and suffering was almost over. However, as they started climbing the rock covered slopes of the Blue Mountains, the illusion of their cool refreshing heights was soon dispelled. The side of the mountain was bare of all vegetation, except a poor kind of sage brush that grew among the rocks and boulders that covered the eastern slope: and the poor emigrants walked up the trail (through the blistering heat and drenching thunder-storms of September) to lessen the burden for their weary, foot-sore animals.

Five months of constant traveling under conditions these travelers had to endure, was beginning to affect them physically; and they could no longer bear the hardships of the journey as they had at the beginning. Then, too, the road over the Blue Mountains, was little more than a trail, weaving in and out among the boulders and ravines, and covered with sharp rocks that cut the feet of the oxen, and made

walking painful for members of the party, whose shoes (if they had any at all) were thin and worn.

Maria drove the mules that pulled the carriage up the hills; for she and the younger children had to ride. They had suffered less than the men and older children; and Maria felt guilty to be riding when others, who were more miserable than she, had to walk. However the Biddles and Cardwells had several characteristics in common, that made them good travelers, and conserved their health and strength. First,—they did the very best they could, and did not allow themselves to worry about the result. Robert would say: "For every evil under the sun, there is a remedy or there is none. If there be one, try and find it. If there be none, never mind it": and he lived by that philosophy. Second,—they all had a keen sense of humor, and could laugh at their own mistakes and failures,—as well as at their good luck, and successes. No matter what happened,—some one would see something to laugh about. Third,—they were all greatly interested in everything they saw or experienced. And fourth,—they all loved to sing. Several of them had musical instruments that they could play around the campfires, or whenever they had a few moments of leisure. A band of travelers who can sing and play, as they go, have the heart and strength to overlook (and overcome) obstacles that would seem insurmountable to others.

At last they reached the summit of the Blue Mountains, and the green expanse of the Valley of the Umitilla came into view. The panorama before them was so far reaching and awe inspiring, they felt that at last they looked upon the Eden of the West: and there were tears of gladness in their eyes, as they knelt down and thanked God for their safe deliverance from the perils of their long journey:—and yet, they were 300 miles from their destination. The climate became more moderate and delightful with each mile of westward travel: and they would have liked to make camp and rest a few days, while the stock grazed on the abundant grass; but it was late in September, and if the stock was to be driven across the Cascade Mountains, before snow covered the narrow game trail they had to follow, there was no time to dally on the way.

Finally, on October 9th, they reached The Dalles, where they planned to continue their journey, as far as Oregon City, by boat. There was a boat going down the river the next day; but it was too crowded to accommodate the whole Biddle party;—although Dr. Henry, with his family and one or two others, managed to get passage. However there was a Government Boat tied up at the wharf, which had been out of commission for some time; and the authorities offered to let the Biddle party use it if they could repair it.

The Biddle and Cardwell men (as well as some of the other members of the party) could turn their minds and hands to anything that had to be done; so they set about repairing the boat. They worked early and late, for several days before they considered it "seaworthy" and safe to take them down the treacherous Columbia. When they first reached The Dalles the Cardwell boys offered to take the stock,

over the trail, to Oregon City; but old timers told them that it would be suicide for any one to attempt to cross the mountains that late in the year: and that, as there was plenty of grass for the stock to winter there, it would be wise to leave them, with some responsible person, until Spring.

Robert secured two half-breeds, who knew the Columbia River, to man their boat; and, after many delays, the party was ready to start on the last lap of their journey. As they glided quietly down the river, the emigrants realized, for the first time, how tired they really were; and a strange lassitude—and drowsiness—seemed to envelop the exhausted men and women when they were able, for the first time since leaving St. Joseph, to relax. But Mary Cardwell and Maria Biddle did not dare to allow themselves the luxury of relaxation even then; for they had little children to watch,—lest they stray dangerously near the side of the boat. As the boat zigzagged from one side of the river to the other, following the channel the half-breeds knew so well, they sang wild French songs that echoed and reechoed, as the sound waves hit the cliffs on either side of the gorge. They seemed to need those songs to keep up their courage as they guided the boat through the rapids: but, as they came into open water, their mood seemed to change with the character of the river; and they talked in whispers so as not to disturb the silence of the scene about them. In places the river was very wide,—almost like a lake; and then it would narrow down as it rushed between the bluffs that rose perpendicularly, several hundred feet, on either side.

The mountains, through which the river had carved its course, were covered with cathedral spired pines, interspersed with dark green cedars, oaks and maples, whose leaves had turned yellow and red with the first frost. There were also laurels, with their deep green, waxy leaves; and the madrone with its large, shiny leaves, red berries and cinnamon-brown trunk and branches;—together with the brilliantly autumn-colored shrubs and vines that covered the hill-sides; and all combined to present, to the immigrants, a never-to-be-forgotten panorama,—so different from anything they had ever seen before, it might have been in another continent. The mountain peaks that rose in majestic beauty, on either side of the river, taxed their powers of description; and they could only gaze at them with reverent awe, and thank God that they had been able to reach that land of enchantment. The silence was so intense as they glided down the stream, surrounded by the natural grandeur of the scene, it gave them a feeling that they were a very small and insignificant part of Nature's plan. The thought was depressing and some one suggested that a song was in order;—and Henry started "Swanee River." Later they sang "Home Sweet Home"; but that time they did not think of their old home and friends they had left in Illinois; but of their new home in Oregon:—for they had reached the Promised Land.

CHAPTER XXX

The overland trip had been a hard one for all members of the party; but the Biddles and Cardwells considered themselves fortunate in not losing a single member of either family. In fact they had added one to their number,—little Arthur Platte Biddle. Now that they had reached the end of their journey, they could lose no time in preparing to live through the winter, which would soon be upon them. They could not hope to build a permanent home before the rainy season; so they accepted Uncle Hamilton Campbell's suggestion to use a couple of the old Mission buildings, that were not in use:—and which they converted into comfortable, temporary homes. The furniture they had sent by freight, around the Horn, had not yet arrived, although the boat, on which it was sent, was long over-due; so the men made beds, chairs, tables and other furniture out of old lumber that was at hand. Some of the old Mission Indians cut and split a quantity of wood, and helped with the carpenter work; so the families were soon settled. Maria and Aunt Mary were natural home makers; and their make-shift quarters were soon comfortable and warm;—and a delight to the emigrants who had lived in wagons and tents for more than half a year. They found it hard to accustom themselves to the cold, damp climate of western Oregon; and all suffered from colds during the long, damp winter. The rains started about the first of November and continued, almost without interruption, throughout the entire winter.

Uncle Will Cardwell had been a licensed physician in Illinois; but he had practiced very little; for he had inherited the tastes of the Lees, of Virginia; and considered farming the ideal life; and he had always loved to work with plants and animals. However it was a great satisfaction to have Uncle Will near by, that winter, to supplement his knowledge of medicine to Maria's good nursing and home-made remedies. His theory was that the family had become susceptible to colds because of the inflamed condition of their noses and throats, caused by breathing the sand and dust laden air during the six months of their 2000 mile trek. However they all weathered the long winter, and seemed to be in good health when Spring came, and were ready to move into their new home "on the claim." At least all of them but little Arthur Platte. He had never seemed to be as robust as the other children; and suffered from colds, with a frequent croupy cough at night; but no one thought that he was seriously ill.

The 29th of November was Maria's birthday; and Aunt Mary prepared a special birthday dinner, for the whole family, in honor of the event. They were all very gay, during the meal, except Maria who could not forget that her birthday was also the anniversary of the death of her first and loveliest daughter, Ellinorah;—but she tried to enter into the spirit of the party, and laughed and made merry with the others. There had been rain for several days; and, when the room began to darken about three in the afternoon, Maria put fresh

wood on the bed-room fire and undressed the baby. She tried to nurse him, but he did not seem able to swallow very well; so she sang to him softly and rocked him to sleep. Then she put him in his cradle and rocked it with her foot until he seemed to be breathing comfortably. As she looked at him there was something about him that reminded her of Ellinorah, who had died just twelve years before. As she lighted the candle, with a taper from the fire, she was thinking of Ellinorah, and of how pretty she had been: and then, as she looked up at the mirror above the mantle, it seemed to be covered by a veil of mist;—and, for an instant, she thought she could see the lovely face of her dead child,—behind the mist. The image (if it really was an image) was only there for a second,—and then it was gone. Little Arthur started to cough and she took him up in her arms and called for Uncle Will Cardwell.

There was nothing that any of them could do; and the child that had survived birth and early infancy on the dangerous Overland Trail was taken from them by death. Maria's grief was soothed by the belief that little Ellinorah had been there, and had tried to let her know that she would care for her baby brother,—and that all was well.

Owing to the fact that the nursery wagon's contents had been lost the Biddles and Cardwells had to make entirely new plans for earning their livings in a new land: but that did not seem very difficult to men who were as versatile and intelligent as they. Their teams and covered wagons that were left, after their long trip, would be in great demand for carrying freight; and Robert, who was a natural speculator, had several thousand dollars which he invested in property that he expected to increase in value.

Maria, who had spent her childhood in the hill country of Eastern Tennessee, had never felt at home on the prairies of Illinois; and now, that the Oregon Land Laws allowed her 160 acres of her own, she was glad that Robert had found 320 acres of good land in a little valley, in the foothills northeast of Marysville (now Corvallis). There were fine springs of water on the property, which fed a small creek that ran down toward the Willamette River. The place was ideal, and Robert filed his application very soon after reaching Oregon; so that some of the land could be cleared and a log cabin built before Spring. He was so enthusiastic about that part of Oregon, he decided to go into the real estate business; and bought a number of town lots from a man by the name of Dixon, who owned property adjoining the village of Marysville, called Dixon's Addition.

With Uncle Hamilton Campbell's help, Robert secured some Indians to cut down trees for fence rails and for building his house; so that the land could be inclosed and the house built by Spring.

CHAPTER XXXI

It rained nearly all winter; but Robert soon learned that Oregonians did not mind the gentle rains that fell almost continuously; and they lost little time from their work: so, by the middle of March (1853) their land had been fenced and a comfortable log house almost finished; so the family moved into their own home on their claim.

Maria had started cuttings from the fruit trees that grew near Salem: and as soon as they moved she had the boys get sandy loam for the seed beds she made in a sheltered place, near the house; and there she planted the vegetable and flower seeds she had brought from Illinois. Among the few shrubs that had been saved, when their nursery stock was lost, was a Chinese Rose and some Scotch Broom. Maria had nursed these plants during the winter, and the Chinese Rose thrived and bloomed for almost fifty years. Maria started so many cuttings from it (for her friends) it became a most popular and common rose in the gardens, not only of Salem and Corvallis,—but of the whole Willamette Valley. The Scotch Broom seeded itself; and, a few years later, the Broom's bright yellow blossoms decorated almost every garden in that part of Oregon;—and later was growing "wild" along the roadsides.

The successful pioneer had to be a many sided man, who could turn his hand to anything when the necessity arose; and it was this quality of versatility, that made the Biddles and Cardwells successful in adjusting themselves to a new and undeveloped community. They were people who (for their day and generation) were well educated and well informed. They were ladies and gentlemen, with a background of Southern Aristocracy: but they were also true pioneers. The men were equally at home "in the halls of the mighty," or working as blacksmiths, carpenters or farmers. They often said that they were Jacks of all trades but Masters of none: but they came near being masters of any situation in which they found themselves, whether it was in the midst of a cultured civilization, or in the wilds of an unchartered wilderness. Such men were our pioneer ancestors. Can their descendants of today measure up to their stature?

Before the house was started, on the Biddle claim, Robert had built a shed, with his forge and anvil at one end, and his carpenter's bench and tools at the other; so that they would all be under cover during the rainy season. Among the Indians that Robert had hired to cut trees for fencing, was one of the old Mission Indians who had helped put up some of the Mission buildings twelve or fourteen years before. When he had been baptized he had taken the name of Jason Lee, in honor of the founder of the Mission; and he prided himself on being a good Christian. He was a good plain carpenter and understood general farming and the care of stock; so he made a first class handyman on their new farm that needed developing. His wife had had years of experience in plain cooking, house cleaning, washing and ironing; so the Biddles considered themselves very fortunate in finding

such good help:—and as soon as their house was finished a cabin was built for Jason and his wife.

It seemed, to Robert and Maria, almost like the old slave days in the South; for, although they paid the Indian couple a nominal sum each month, they also furnished them with shelter, food and clothes. They treated Jason, and his wife Mary, with kindness and consideration; but in return they expected, and received, loyalty, obedience and service.

During that first winter in Oregon the family started to learn Chinook Jargon, which was the inter-tribal language used by the Indians of the Northwest: and was in general use among the French and English traders,—or others who had dealings with the Indians. It was not difficult to learn; and Robert and the children could speak it well enough to make themselves understood, by the time they went to the claim. In fact, the younger children could carry on quite a conversation with the Indians (and even among themselves) by the time they had been in Salem three or four months.

A good school for girls had already been established in Marysville; and Emma and Puggie rode their Indian ponies, one on each side of their father's larger horse, as they went to school each morning. It would have been perfectly safe for them to have ridden in alone; but Southern tradition required that all girls (or young ladies) should be properly chaperoned at all times;—and besides, Robert thought that he should go in to town each morning. He had established a real estate and insurance business, in the rapidly growing village, which needed his attention. Then too, he had been appointed Clerk of Benton County, soon after the family had moved to the claim; and that required a large amount of writing. He was also busy organizing a "Division of the Sons of Temperance": for he and the Cardwells, the Campbells, the Dixons, the Bronsons and other outstanding families of that locality, were anxious to have their little town a model community in which to live and rear their children. They were all agreed that intoxicating liquor was the cause of most of the lawlessness, degradation and crime, in the West: so they sought not only to discourage its use in Marysville, but also to discourage persons of drinking habits, or loose morals, from settling in their midst.

As there was no Presbyterian Church in Marysville, the Biddles retained their membership in the church in Illinois; but they attended both of the established churches (the Baptist and the Methodist); and Maria contributed to Church suppers,—socials or bazaars held by either of them. Their Christianity was of a very liberal sort: and they felt that any honest Christian could worship reverently and sincerely in any church: but they thought that every good citizen, who was interested in the moral welfare of his community, should help to support the churches that ministered to that community.

The boys, Henry and Robert Jr., stayed with their Aunt Mary, during the school term, and attended the Oregon Institute at Salem.

On February 2nd, 1854, the last child, a little girl, was born to the Biddle family; and they named her Alice. Maria was almost forty

years old and had had eight children. Her children had been a real source of pride and comfort to her; and she was always happy when she held a baby in her arms: so little Alice was born into a delightful home, where she was loved and petted and spoiled from the moment of her birth.

As Marysville grew to be a town of more importance, many thought that it should have a more dignified name; and a committee selected the name of Corvallis. There was much building going on: and the new brick-yard and saw-mill had men working overtime to meet the demands of the builders. James Cardwell opened the first Drug Store, on a corner of Main Street; where he carried a large line of drugs and sundries;—and had his dental office in a room, back of the store, which faced the side street.

Robert made plans, about this time, to build a new home in town. Eddie would soon be old enough to go to school; and with three children in school, it would be more convenient, for the whole family, to live in town;—especially during the winter months, when the days were short and storms frequent; but they did not plan to leave the Claim entirely; for they loved the freedom of the farm.

CHAPTER XXXII

When their new home in Corvallis was finished it was one of the most attractive houses in the town. In fact it was considered quite grand. There were four bedrooms on the upper floor, while down stairs were the parlor, sitting room, bedroom, dining-room, kitchen, pantry, store room and hall. The well was about thirty feet deep, brick lined and sealed in under the kitchen floor; so the water could be brought up into the house by a hand pump near the wooden kitchen sink. There was a wide porch across the front of the house, with a veranda above, supported by four heavy pillars. The house stood back about fifty feet from the street, and was painted white. Maria loved flowers; and as she and Robert were expert gardeners, it was soon surrounded by a beautiful garden of choice shrubs and flowers; and became one of the show places of the pretty little town of Corvallis.

Robert bought the furniture for their new house in Portland; and had it brought to Corvallis in his own freight wagons. It was arranged in the house while Maria was still out at the Claim: and then he brought her in to see her newly furnished home. As she went about admiring everything, she noticed an I. M. Singer Sewing Machine, which was a special surprise gift from Robert. It was one of the first sewing machines brought to Oregon; but Maria had read about them, and had often wished that she might have one, if they were really as good as they were said to be;—However she had never dreamed that she would ever own one herself. She was very proud of her new home, and of the handsome things Robert had bought to furnish it. The parlor was especially grand, with its green and red carpet, its green and black window drapes, its hand carved, walnut parlor set upholstered in black horse-hair;—and its new piano which he had bought to replace the one they had shipped from Springfield, and which had been lost in transit (with most of their other furniture) near Cape Horn.

The sitting-room looked more comfortable, although it was not as handsomely furnished: but it was there that Maria had her sewing-cabinet and her wonderful sewing-machine.

As soon as they were settled in their new home, all of their friends, and many people they had never met before, came to call. Maria always kept cakes and hot water ready so that she could serve tea to her afternoon callers,—from the silver tea service she had brought from Springfield. She knew that most of her visitors were more interested in her new house, and its contents, than they were in her: but she understood human nature; and, although she soon knew that the sewing-machine was the real attraction, she was always courteous to her inquisitive guests, and showed it again and again,—and demonstrated its use to each and all who came. They hardly believed their eyes when they saw the beautiful, even stitches, that were made so rapidly: but, when they realized that it took

twice as much thread to sew, on the machine, as it did to do the same work by hand, they decided that a sewing-machine was such an extravagance it could never be popular. People were much more truthful then than they are today; and the women made poor, economical Maria quite uncomfortable by their discussion of the sin of extravagance.

Maria, who firmly believed that "wilful waste brings woeful want",—and who tried to teach her children prudence and economy, felt that Robert *had* been extravagant in buying her such a gift:—but she loved him for his generosity, and never offered any criticism. When he heard what the women of the community had been saying, he said: "Now Ma, you mustn't pay any attention to what a lot of women have to say. Remember Aesop's fable about the Man, his Son and the Donkey, and you will realize that there is nothing that any one can do that will not cause some criticism. I think that a sewing-machine is a good investment: for it will save you time and energy,—and eye strain. Any woman who has a large family, and sews as many hours a day (and night) as you do, should have any kind of machine that will make her work easier. You have always used your eyes too much at night, when the light on your work was poor; and now you should be able to do your sewing in half the time, and quit sewing at night altogether."

The members of the Biddle family were all musical. Robert and his sisters,—and all of their children, could sing; and most of them could play one or two musical instruments. Henry and young Robert played the violin and flute. Emma had a sweet singing voice and accompanied herself with the guitar. She and Puggie were also learning to play the piano. Even little Eddie showed marked musical talent; for he could pick out tunes and play any simple melody on the piano, by ear. He had also learned to play on an old fife (that had belonged to his father),—which he blew on almost constantly, to the exasperation of the other members of the family. Maria had learned to play on the pianoforte at the Female Academy at Knoxville, before her marriage; but she had neglected her music for many years, and contented herself by adding a good alto voice to the singing. Robert seemed to be able to play any instrument he tried; but, as a member of their home orchestra, he usually played the bass-viol. Having such a large family of brothers and sisters, uncles, aunts and cousins (who all had so much in common), it was very easy for the family to become self-satisfied and self-centered. They had such good times at home, they seldom cared to go other places for amusement: but they had hosts of friends who visited them and whom they enjoyed at their own home.

Soon after they reached Oregon, Maria had invested the money she had brought with her (sewed up in her feather mattress), in Corvallis town lots: and had later sold them for business property,—for twice as much as she had paid for them. As Pa's investments had also been successful, she did not spend any of her own "capital"; but reinvested it carefully, with the idea of having an inde-

pendent income,—to be used if they were, ever again, caught in financial difficulties,—like the panic of 1837,—and her poverty of 1849 to 1850.

The family still spent much of its time at the claim, where the young fruit trees were beginning to bear; and berries and vegetables were plentiful. The Indian care-takers also raised hay and grain, kept the fences mended, and looked after the stock; so that the place was self supporting. With their fine, new home in town, and their children developing so satisfactorily, Robert and Maria were very happy indeed, and were glad that they had had the courage to come to this new country. They almost worshipped their boys, who were fast growing into manhood. They were lively boys,—always playing pranks on each other; but they were also kind and considerate. Henry was a fine looking young man who “took after the Biddles”, and was almost as tall as his father. When he finished his course at the Institute, he was anxious to get into some kind of business; for he had become interested in one of the Institute girls, and hoped to be ready to marry her as soon as he was twenty-one.

Robert gave him one of his freight wagons and a four mule team; and hoped that, by hauling freight, he could build up a business that would eventually lead to something better: for men, in the West were making fortunes handling freight.

Young Robert was finishing his last year at the Institute; and was like his mother,—modest and unassuming, but quick witted and clever; so that, wherever he happened to be, he was a welcome member of any group. Emma was growing rapidly, and was the pride of the whole family. She was considered quite a musician; and could sew, embroider, knit and crochet as well as her mother did, at the same age. Although she was still little more than a child, young men, as well as boys of her own age, were paying her special attention.

Robert and Maria still kept up their correspondence with friends and relatives in Illinois and Tennessee:—and they received a weekly paper from Springfield; but most of the news was about social and political unrest. Maria had a letter from her sister, Matilda, in November 1857, telling of the death of her second husband, Benjamin Dickinson; and of the last illness of their sister Lucy Jane Epps. Lucy Jane was ten years younger than Maria, and had always been her favorite sister. She had been married fourteen years, and had had seven children, four of whom were still living. Matilda said that she was staying with the children until their father, William Epps could make some permanent arrangements for their care. It seemed only yesterday that Maria had paid her last visit to Tazewell, and Lucy Jane, though somewhat frail, and despondent over the deaths of her two babies, had been so young and pretty,—and the children had thought she looked like an angel.

The news from the States was all depressing. The slavery question was far from settled. The Yankees were growing more troublesome throughout the South; and talk of war was growing more

serious as time went by: so, when Maria thought of her fine boys, who were rapidly reaching manhood, she was truly thankful that she lived so far from the center of conflict: for she could not bear to think of her boys being caught in the turmoil and strife of civil war.

CHAPTER XXXIII

The early settlers of Benton County, who had children to educate, were anxious to have a school, for higher education, organized in Corvallis: and in January, 1854, they succeeded in having an act passed by the Legislature, establishing the Corvallis Seminary, and B. R. Biddle and William Dixon were named as two of the Board of Directors: but lack of funds, and other complications, made it impossible for the Seminary to be started at that time.

As the population increased, and the need for such an institution became more urgent, the Methodist Church became interested, and in January, 1858, the Legislature passed a more comprehensive act, which provided for the organization of the Corvallis College; and Uncle Will Cardwell was named one of the Trustees. But, as much preliminary work had to be done; and most of the money for financing the College had to be raised in Benton County,—it was not until 1865 that the college was ready to serve the people of the community.

In January, 1858, when Henry, and his brother Robert were hauling freight from Portland to Corvallis, a terrible storm blew up in the afternoon; and Maria, immediately began to worry about her boys who were out in the wind and sleet and cold. They always got home before dark, if possible; but that night they were late; and she kept walking back and forth, between the kitchen and the outside door, imagining all sorts of things that might have befallen them. She added fuel to the kitchen fire to keep their suppers warm, and to heat the water in the tank on the back of the stove.

At last, when they did come, the boys were chilled and their clothes were wet to the skin. While they changed their wet clothes for the warm night garments Maria had ready for them, she got their mustard foot-baths ready. They sat in the warm kitchen, with their feet in the hot mustard baths, while they ate hot broth, and a light supper, before getting into their warm beds. The treatment seemed to be just what Robert needed; for he suffered no ill effects from his experience: but Henry was chilly all night, and he had a severe headache the next morning. His cheeks were flushed, his forehead hot, and his throat so sore he could scarcely swallow. Maria treated him with simple home remedies, and sent for Uncle Will Cardwell. Dr. Cardwell did not want to alarm Maria; but he knew that Henry was a very sick young man: and, as he had not practiced medicine for a number of years, he advised them to send for another physician at once. The doctor agreed with Uncle Will, that Henry was suffering from a severe case of Pneumonia. Although he had every care that medical skill and good nursing could give, it was several weeks before he was able to leave his bed: and it was not until the warm Spring weather had brought out the wildflowers, and birds were nesting in the rosebush by his window, that he was able to walk out of doors again. He still looked frail, and his cough

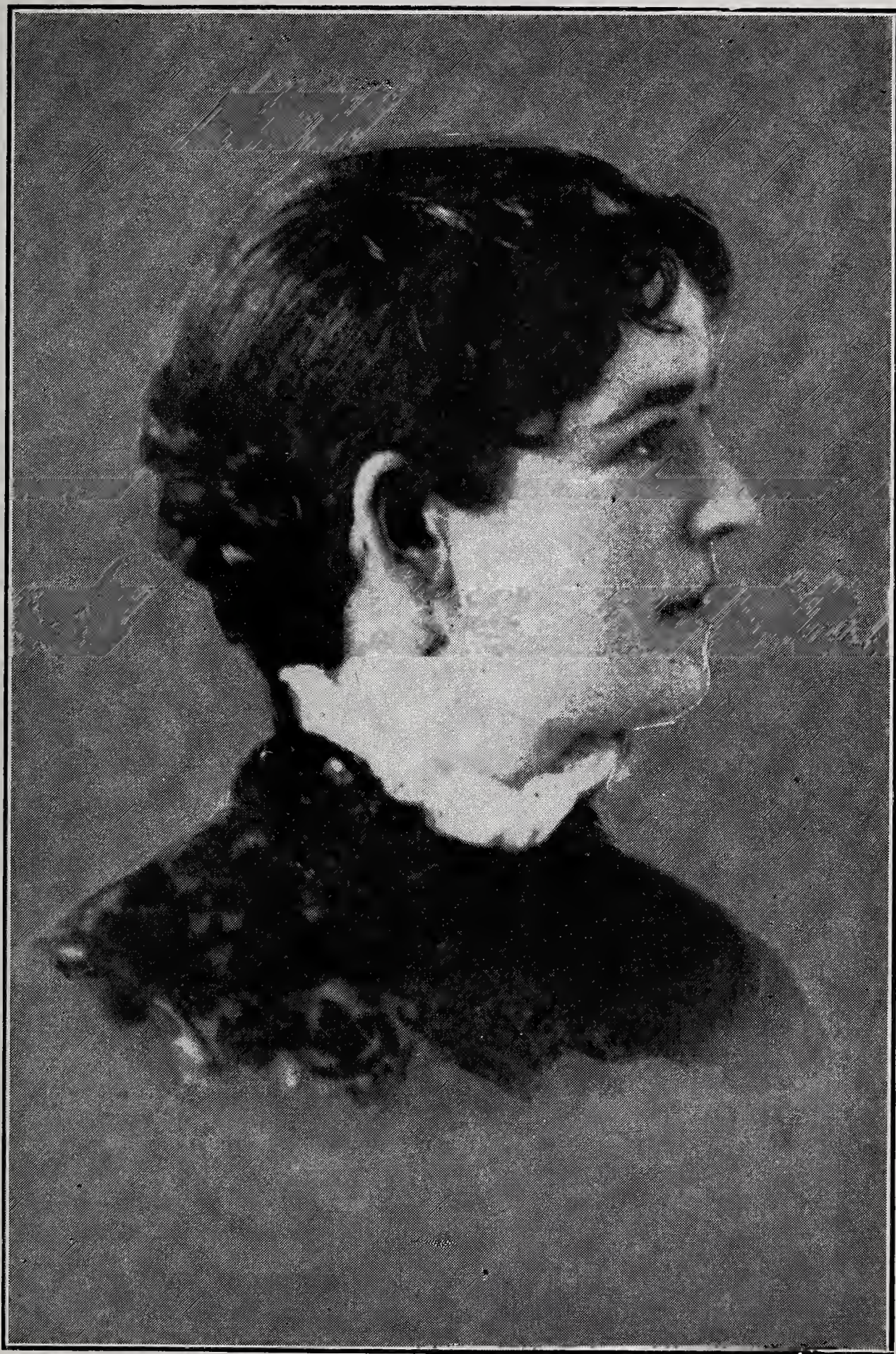
hung on; but he insisted on going back to work. Maria tried to persuade him to wait until he was stronger, and had stopped coughing; but Henry, who was almost twenty-one, and was planning to be married before Christmas, counted each day of idleness a financial loss; and he was sure that he would be happier, and would get well quicker, if he were working.

When a son has grown to be a man, and wishes to do something that sounds reasonable; there is nothing his mother can do about it, even though her intuition warns her that he is making a mistake. So, Henry went back to hauling freight. His brother, and one of his cousins, helped him, so he had no heavy lifting to do; and, because he was happy, he seemed to improve rapidly, but his cough hung on.

A few weeks later young Robert came down stairs, one night, and called his mother, to tell her that Henry had been talking incoherently, and seemed so strange, he thought she should go up to see him. He added that his brother had not been feeling well for some time; but did not want anyone to know, for fear he would have to quit work. He had kept saying: "Don't tell Pa and Ma that I feel so bad,—it would worry them,—and I'll be all right again soon. I've got rheumatism. That's what makes me ache so I'll be all right tomorrow, so don't tell anybody how bad I feel." Marie knew, at once, that his condition was serious, and applied home remedies while Robert went for the Doctor. It was a relapse of his earlier trouble; but he no longer had his normal resistance. However, he did improve, and was again able to be up and around the house. He even sat in his chair, by the side of the piano, and played obligatos on his violin, while Emma sang and played her own piano accompaniment. He loved music, and after his bed was moved downstairs, the other members of the family would play their orchestra numbers, each evening, while he lay there listening, until he dropped off to sleep. The weather was quite warm during the first part of June; and he seemed to improve so much they planned to invite his fiancée, and some of his cousins, to the house to help him celebrate his 21st birthday on June the 22nd. On the 19th he was able to sit on the porch most of the day; but late in the afternoon he complained of being tired, and went to bed early. About midnight Maria went to his room to see if he was covered. She listened to see if he were asleep, and she could not hear him breathe; and when she put her hand on his forehead, it was cold.

Henry had been their first born and most wanted child; and was the apple of his father's eye. He had always been a model boy and young man,—handsome, intelligent, reliable, thoughtful and kind; and his death was a terrible blow to his family,—and to the people of the community who knew him; for he had been prominently connected with the business, social, musical and church activities of his home town.

Robert seemed stunned,—and sat in his chair with his head buried in his hands,—heedless of the others,—bewildered and brooding over his grief:—until little Alice climbed on his knee, and took his hand in



ALICE BIDDLE MORELAND
1885

hers and said: "Don't feel so bad, Pa, I'm here with you. Please don't feel so bad, Pa—cause you've got me, and little Alice loves Pa more than anybody"; and so baby Alice, whom he adored, was the only one who could comfort Robert in his great grief.

Time went on; but nothing seemed the same without Henry. Young Robert, who was only eighteen months younger than Henry, and had been his constant companion during his whole life, seemed to lose some of his zest for life, with the passing of his brother. He continued to do everything he could to please his parents; and tried to make up to them (if that were possible) for the loss of his brother; but he could never quite forget his own loneliness and grief. One day, several weeks later, he said to his mother: "You know, Ma, I still wake up at night and I think I hear Henry coughing,—or calling to me; and then,—although I know it is just my imagination (or a dream), I lay there awake, for hours; and wait for him to call again." Maria said: "I wake up at night, too, and think that I can hear him, and sometimes, even during the day, I think I can hear him cough:—but we know that if Henry were really near, he would not be coughing; for there can be no sickness after death. And young Robert replied: "I try to reason that way too; but Henry didn't want to leave us; and I have a feeling that he is still near, all of the time: and because we can't see him, and he can't talk to us,—he wants us to come to him, so that we can be together again. Sometimes, when I am almost asleep—just half way between consciousness and deep sleep—, it seems to me that I can see him smiling and holding out his hands to reach me." "You mustn't imagine such terrible things, my dear; for you know how much we all need you here. Think of Pa and me,—and Emma and all the rest of the family! Ever since you and Henry were babies, Pa has dreamed of the men you were going to be,—gentlemen of intelligence and character, who would carry the Biddle name and ideals on to other generations. It is a sort of immortality on Earth to live on through ones children and grandchildren, and so on, through the countless ages to come. Besides loving you so much and being so proud of you, (now that Henry is gone) all of his ambition for the future is centered in you; and, if he should lose you, I am afraid it would kill him. You and I must forget our grief,—or at least we must hide it for the sake of the others. Emma is being brave; and we must live to make the others happy," said Maria, with tears in her eyes.

For weeks, after Henry's death, his father seemed to live in a daze. He could not sleep or eat or interest himself in anything about him. Maria cooked the foods he always liked best, and tried, in every way to 'rouse him from his lethargy,—until she was at her wit's end; and said one day, to his sister Mary Cardwell: "If we could only get him away from here for awhile it might help!" They talked to Uncle Will about their problem; and he went over to the Biddle's home, the next evening and announced that he and his family were going over to Yaquina Bay to camp for a month, and that he had come over to see if the Biddles would like to go with them. The children were all

eager to go; and Robert, who loved the out-of-doors, agreed that it was just what he wanted to do: and, after talking the matter over that evening, they started, the next morning, to get ready for their trip.

There was no wagon road from Corvallis to Yaquina Bay; but there was an old Indian trail, that had been used by the pioneers, and was safe for pack trains and horse-back-riders: so they all had to go on horse-back and take their equipment on pack animals. Small boats stopped at the bay; so they could get flour and a few necessities at the small store near where they planned to stay. When they reached the bay the men built a shelter of drift-wood and lumber, that had been washed ashore,—and covered it with canvas, under which they made a long bed,—long enough for them all to sleep in one long row,—with the women and girls sleeping at one end, and the men and boys at the other end of their long, comfortable, fern-lined bed. Fish, clams, wild game and berries were plentiful; while milk and fresh vegetables could be had from a near by farm. Their days were filled by the simple tasks of simple living:—gathering wood, caring for the stock, picking berries, hunting, fishing, cooking, washing, cleaning and visiting. Then, when the day's work was over, they would build a camp-fire on the beach; and, as they sat on logs facing the fire and enjoying its heat, they would sing familiar songs;—and the older people would tell stories of their past adventures, or of the experiences of their ancestors "back in the States", in the days of long ago. The farmer who lived near by, and the fisherman who lived in the shack near the Point, often joined them and added *their* stories to the evening's entertainment.

Just before bed-time Maria would take hot light-rolls out of the Dutch ovens, and Robert would rake baked potatoes from the ashes, and Uncle Will would take the bucket of steamed mussels from the tripod over the fire; and these, added to the nuts and apples donated by the farmer, made a banquet fit for a king. Later they would all go to bed and be lulled to sleep by the rhythmic pounding of the surf below,—and the murmur of the night winds in the trees above.

Some Indians, who lived on the other side of the bay, came to see them and were very friendly. Robert and the children talked to them in the Chinook jargon; and Maria showed her good will by giving them some fried corn-pones: so they loaned the campers their canoes, and told them where to find the best wild berries and hazle nuts.

The camping trip was a great success; and the whole family returned to Corvallis about the first of September, feeling refreshed in body and spirit. The only unpleasant part of the whole trip was the rain storm they encountered on the way home. They not only got soaking wet, but the trail became so slippery it was not safe to travel. Fortunately they were near an old abandoned pioneer cabin, where they were able to make a fire and dry their wet clothes. They cleaned the place out, as well as they could, and stayed there over night. The next day was clear: but that storm made them wish, more

than ever, that a wagon road could be built from Corvallis to the bay. If there were only a road the trip could be made in a covered wagon, where they could take a tent, and other things, to make themselves comfortable on future camping trips. If there was a road the trip could be made in less time, and they could go more often: and if they could go often it would be worth while to build a cabin where they had camped.

Robert tried to interest himself in his Real Estate and Insurance business; but he kept thinking about Yaquina Bay,—its beauty and its delightful climate. To one who had always lived inland, far from any large body of water, it seemed the most delightful place in the world. Boats of considerable size could land there; and it was an ideal place for a thriving town, if the bay could be connected with the Willamette Valley by a good wagon road; and he believed that the time was ripe for the building of such a road.

Whenever Robert became convinced that a place was going to be “opened up” and developed, he was anxious to “get in on the ground floor” and buy property before it became valuable: so he set about getting land at Yaquina Bay; which he planned to use for a camp site for his family; and later sell in subdivisions when it became valuable.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Young Robert started to work in the drug store for his cousin James, who was planning to move to Portland, as soon as he could satisfactorily dispose of his property. His drug store was the first in the Willamette Valley; and James Cardwell had taken great pride in building up the business. As he was anxious for it to remain in the family, Robert agreed to buy it if his son Robert should become sufficiently interested in its management.

Emma, now almost sixteen, was considered a beautiful and accomplished young lady. She played the organ, piano and guitar, and sang with a soprano voice of exceptional quality, which was in constant demand by church choirs and musical entertainments of all kinds. She sewed well and made her own and her sisters dresses. Like her mother, she had a keen sense of humor, an active mind, and hands that were never idle. The house was filled with her handiwork, and every one praised her industry and accomplishments. Such a girl, naturally, had many friends; and was greatly sought after by the young men of the community: but her devotion to her brother Robert, and other members of her family, seemed to fill her need for companionship, at that time.

Puggie was a tall, fair complexioned girl of twelve who was devoted to her father; and accompanied him on most of his horse-back trips about the country. She was not as domestically inclined as Emma, although she did her share of the house-work without complaint. She liked to read, or be out of doors; and was never so happy as when she could spend a few days—or weeks—out on the Claim, where she could take her horse and dog, and go exploring in the near by hills.

Eddie was a fair-haired boy of nine, with large blue eyes and unusual musical talent,—who went whistling about the house, and making a great amount of noise playing (by ear) all of the musical instruments that belonged to the other members of the family. He was clever and quick witted, like his mother; and full of nervous energy, high-strung, head-strong, and quick to take offence like the Biddles:—all of which made him a very capable and delightful person, as long as he had his own way. As Robert always had all of the children under perfect control, Eddie's faults were not glaring; and he always seemed to be his mother's favorite. Maria said that when he was born that year that Robert was in California;—and she was so worried and lonely,—it seemed that he had been sent to comfort her, and that *he was all hers*; while the others had always been shared with Pa.

At this time little Alice was a beautiful child of five, with a charm of manner that made her a general favorite. Her father adored her, and never tired of telling of her perfections. He would say: "She is so bright and obedient and kind, she has never had to be punished." What he, and the rest of the family, never knew, was

that Alice was just as head-strong and determined as Eddie: but she seemed to know, intuitively, how to manage every one, so that she could get what she wanted. She was always very sensitive, and if she was disappointed, or unable to have her own way, she just grew sad and drooped,—like a delicate flower; and was so pretty and disconsolate in her disappointment, those who had opposed her felt ashamed of themselves, and not only gave her what she had wanted; but did something special for her besides,—to atone for the unhappiness they had caused her. So dainty little Alice was a diplomatic dictator in her home—or wherever she happened to be—who ruled those about her with pleasant words, a smile, a charming personality, and an occasional look of wounded innocence:—who got what she wanted in a way that made others feel that she was bestowing favors by accepting what they could give. However she was not only intelligent and beautiful, she was kind and capable and industrious, as well. She could carry a tune before she could talk; and Emma taught her to play on the piano as soon as she could climb up on the piano stool and find the keys with her little fingers.

During the summer of 1859 Maria's hair grew noticeably grayer and her eyes failed so rapidly she could no longer do fine needle work (in which she had always taken such pride), even with the aid of glasses; but she was still able to read, and tried to keep informed about the world in which she lived. Some said, that grief after the death of Henry, had caused her hair to lose its luster; and that much weeping had dimmed her eyesight: but no one ever *saw* Maria give way to any emotion. She went on each day, attending to her household tasks,—doing her part of the church work, and helping with the suppers for "The Sons of Temperance". She believed that "a woman's place is in her home", and that homemaking was an all time job, if it was properly done. Home was the place for every member of the family to find love and comfort and understanding,—a place where each could seek advise and inspiration. In order to give advise, the homemaker should be well informed and up to date. Maria had always managed to be a well informed woman; but she was careful not to let others (outside of the family) know it. It was not considered "lady-like" for a woman to interest herself in national, and international, affairs in 1859; and she did not wish to cause her family embarrassment by giving the impression that she was strong minded, or masculine,—instead of being a "perfect lady" who merited the approval of her friends.

Robert was still "as straight as an arrow", but had lost some of the elasticity from his step, his hair was thinning near his temples, and his beard was turning grey.

Young Robert was well qualified for his work at the drug store, and seemed to enjoy it. He learned rapidly, was well liked by the people of the community, and was delighted and flattered by the increase in the business: but his enthusiasm was greater than his physical endurance; and, after working twelve hours a day, he would go home at night exhausted. Maria thought he was overworking; but

he laughed at the idea. The Biddles all had such an unusual amount of nervous energy they never realized that they were tired, until an attack of "nuralgia of the stomach", or some other nervous ailment, kept them in bed for a few days, while they got much needed rests. There seemed to be a compelling force that drove them to ceaseless activity:—to continual effort toward accomplishment. Robert and his sisters had always been that way; and they not only had to be constantly busy, but were nervous and unhappy whenever those about them were idle. Robert would say: "If you love life do not squander time, for time is what life is made of"; and "Never put off 'till tomorrow what you can do today, for tomorrow will bring its own problems.";—and he kept busily at work,—making the best of each fleeting hour. He went to the store to help his son, whenever he thought he could be useful; but young Robert wanted to do everything himself,—until one evening in July, he went home with a bad cold. His father looked after the store until he felt well enough to return to work. He must have gone back to the store too soon; for it was only a few days before he was ill again,—and the doctor said he had pneumonia. He only lived a few days after that: and, on August 31st, less than four months before his twenty-first birthday, he had gone to join his beloved brother:—and another radiant light, in the family circle, had been snuffed out. Through the gloom of their sorrow the others had to find their way back, through new adjustments, into the family life that no longer seemed complete. The grief-stricken parents had to carry on as best they could; for their four remaining children were entitled to a happy, normal home.

CHAPTER XXXV

Robert had always prided himself on his self-control;—on his ability to be pleasant to those about him, under any circumstances: and he had tried to teach his children one of his rules of life by a simple verse, they could easily remember:—

“For every evil under the sun
There is a remedy or there is none.
If there be one,—try and find it.
If there be none,—never mind it.”

Since he had been a child he had been able to follow the precepts of this philosophy: but the death of his adored sons had taught him that he could not always overcome the effects of an evil for which there was no remedy. It was Emma's need for support that saved him from a mental break down. The shock had affected her so greatly, he and Maria almost forgot their own grief in their solicitude for her. Emma had almost worshiped her older brothers. She had preferred them to any of her numerous admirers. They had practiced their music together,—had the same friends; and had been almost inseparable since they were small children: so it seemed to her that life was not worth living without them.

Robert and Maria did everything they could to take her mind from her grief: and Mr. Spencer (a young friend of the family), who had watched her grow up, helped the others try to interest her in something that would take her mind away from her sorrow. He bought her the latest music, and sat by the piano while she played it for him. He even played some of it himself,—and sang duets with her. He took her riding, and bought carefully selected gifts that he thought might please her;—and felt well compensated if he saw her face light up with a smile, as she acknowledged his kindness.

One day when he found Robert alone, Mr. Spencer asked his permission to make Emma his wife. As he was a man of good moral character, with a well established business, who was noted for his kindness and consideration of others, there was no reason why Robert should object to him as a son-in-law: so he gave his permission for Mr. Spencer to press his suit. That night, when Robert told Maria, he said: “Emma is old enough to marry and have a home of her own: and a husband, like Willie Spencer, might do more than we can to help her forget the loss of her brothers.”

A few days later Maria and Emma were in the sitting-room, looking over the week's mending. Emma was darning a tiny hole in an embroidered collar, when she said: “I always remember, Ma, that when I was a little girl, starting to mend my clothes, you told me that ‘a stitch in time saves nine’: and I used to wonder how you knew that just one stitch would save exactly nine,—if that one stitch was taken in time. Although I didn't exactly understand,—

that saying always comes back to my mind whenever I see even the tiniest hole in anything; and I want to get it mended before it gets any larger and needs any more stitches." And Maria, who was looking at a worn place in Eddie's pants, said: "My mother used to say, 'a patch beside a patch is neighborly, but a patch on top of a patch is beggarly': but I think I'll put a patch on top of this patch anyway; for, if I do, Eddie can still wear these pants when he rides the horses, out on the claim." Then, after a pause, Emma said: "Mr. Spencer wants to marry me Ma, and I promised to give him an answer next week. You know, when the boys were here, I was so happy I thought I'd never want to marry any body and go away from home: but Mr. Spencer has been very kind to me; and he wants to take me, on one of the big boats, to Portland and Astoria, for our wedding trip. Then we could come back here and have a nice new home near you. Do you think that I ought to marry him?" Maria thought for a moment, and then said: "You'll want to get married some time, in the next two or three years,—and Pa thinks Mr. Spencer is a very fine man: but you shouldn't marry any man unless you love and respect him,—and feel that you can't be happy without him. Troubles come to every family, at some time or another; and it takes a lot of loving to make a person willing to give up everything to another, just to make him happy. This is a man's world, and a husband should always be the head of his family. A good wife always tries to please him; and make his home the pleasantest place in the world for him to go to when he is through with his work. If you love him enough to consider his wishes before your own; and if you think that he is good enough, and wise enough to be at the head of your family, and be a proper example for your children;—then you should marry him: and I am sure you will be happy." Emma went over and knelt by the side of her mother and kissed her, and said: "Oh Ma, you are always so wise! I don't think I could ever love any other man as much as I did my brothers; but we could not have had them with us, at home, much longer, even if they had lived; for they would have married and gone away to homes of their own. I think that (next to Pa) Mr. Spencer is the nicest man I know; and I am sure he will be good to me. You always seem to know what is best for all of us; and my greatest ambition is to make as fine a home for my husband as you have made for Pa and all of us children.": so it was decided that she and Mr. Spencer would be married in September; and she, and her mother, went to Portland to buy materials from which to make her household linens and her wedding clothes.

In February, 1860, the Court received a petition, from the people of Benton and Polk Counties, praying for a road from Corvallis (through the mountain passes) to the tide water of Yaquina Bay: and appointed B. R. Biddle, Stephen Robnett and Ichabod Hinkle to act as viewers. These men were all familiar with the old Indian and Pioneer trails between Corvallis and the Bay: and they set about mapping out the best route for the proposed road. This was stren-

uous work. The men took their guns, surveying instruments, canvas, blankets, a sack of corn meal and salt, on their pack horses; and stayed out until their survey was completed and their report ready.

It was late in August when they submitted their report (as a result of their viewing) to the court that had appointed them. The cost of the undertaking would be too great for the Counties to assume without a vote of the taxpayers who would have to finance it: so work, on the project, had to be postponed until some means of financing it could be assured.

In the mean time, Maria and Emma had been busy hemming sheets and pillowcases, table cloths and napkins, and making all sorts of things for the home Emma was planning. Her cousins came several times, each week, with their thimbles, to spend the day, while they helped with the sewing. Maria was celebrated for her cooking, and always had delicious food for the guests who filled the house with their lively chatter. Maria had the bed taken out of "the boy's room" up stairs; and put the quilting frames up there,—so that the older women could work at the quilting without disturbing the girls, who were busily at work down stairs. Emma made one entire set of fine linen underwear, which was elaborately trimmed with hand embroidery: and she had yards and yards of finely tatted and crocheted lace for trimming her ruffled petticoats, her chemises and pantalettes. Her father cut the pattern for her wedding dress, which she, and her mother, made of cream-colored silk, like a picture in the last number of Godey's Lady's Book: and she planned to wear a light yellow rose in her hair, to match the yellow diamond in her engagement ring.

Every one loved sweet Emma Biddle; and each friend and relative wanted to do something to help prepare for the wedding.

At last the great day arrived, in September; and it was an ideal day for the wedding,—warm and sunny, with just a trace of Autumn on the trees and in the air. The house had been tastefully decorated by loving hands,—the wedding ceremony was duly impressive, and the bride was very beautiful. Most of the women wept, but Emma had a smile on her face, and William Spencer held his head high and was sure that he was the luckiest and happiest man in the world.

CHAPTER XXXVI

The Biddles had been in Oregon eight years, in the Fall of 1860, and they still kept in touch with their friends and relatives in Tennessee and Illinois: and in December, of that year Robert received a long letter from Abraham Lincoln, in which he told all of the latest gossip of their mutual Springfield friends, and gave a personal account of his campaign and election to the presidency. He also inclosed a small picture of himself, mounted on a piece of blue calico, which had been one of his campaign badges,—and had been worn pinned on the lapel of the coat of a political follower. Many thousands of them had been worn in the North, before the election; but it was the first one Robert had seen.

It was also in 1860 that William H. Barnhart (the husband of Robert's niece, Mary Campbell) was appointed Indian Agent for Umitilla. For many years he had been secretary to James W. Nesmith, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon. When Mr. Nesmith was elected United States Senator, W. H. Rector was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and Barnhart was appointed to the Umitilla Agency. The Biddles, as Christians, had always wished that they could help to improve the condition of the red-skins: and, when Mr. Barnhart told them of the deplorable condition of the Indians of the Siletz Agency (between Corvallis and Yaquina Bay) Robert was sure that he could better their condition if he had the proper authority: so he applied for the position of Indian Agent for Siletz.

Being a personal friend of the president was, no doubt, a factor in his securing the appointment; as there were a number of other applicants for the position. Robert was a natural Crusader, and looked forward to making useful, Christian men and women from a conglomeration of Indians,—many of whom were from the most savage and unruly tribes of Western Oregon.

It was the first time he had ever worked for the Government; and he was strangely ignorant of politics, as they affected appointees for Government jobs. He had to select several persons to work at the Agency; and there were ten or twelve applicants for each position. He tried to secure reliable, hard-working men who would manage their several departments efficiently. It did not occur to him that political influence should be considered a qualification for a job; and the most influential politicians among the applicants were rejected as being unfit for the work:—and they immediately became his enemies, and started making trouble for him before his real work, at the agency had started.

He took charge on October first, 1861, just after the beginning of the Civil War, when the merchants of the West were afraid to sell goods to the Government on credit; and when all kinds of ridiculous rumors about the war, and its effect on the United States Government, were in circulation.

The physician and the blacksmith Robert appointed proved to be very unsatisfactory: and when he tried to make them attend to their duties properly, they grew angry and tried to stir up trouble with the Indians; by telling them that the Government at Washington had been destroyed. That they would never get any more annuities, and that they had better leave the reservation and return to their former homes, where they could start war on the settlements if any one bothered them. When Robert found what had been going on, he dismissed the doctor, the blacksmith and the mule train driver. He appointed other, and better men, to take their places; but not until after they had caused a great amount of trouble.

He then called all of the Chiefs, and other "head men" of the Indian tribes, together and had a "big talk" with them. Most of their grievances were purely imaginary; but some were well founded and real. Among the latter was the nonfulfilment of treaty stipulations by the Government. The Indians said that they had entered into treaties with the Government, years ago; and that they had been promised, from one year to another, that those treaties would be ratified by the Great Council at Washington; and that they had waited patiently;—but their patience was exhausted, and they had made up their minds to go back to their own country. They also said that some white men had told them that, if they would leave the reservation and kill a few white men, the Government would hurry to ratify their treaties and carry out their agreements.

Robert told the Indians that the United States Government was *all powerful* and would punish any Indians (or white men either) who rebelled against its authority: and that it would also reward those who were faithful and true in their allegiance. He assured them that, if they stayed on the Reservation, and behaved themselves properly, their treaties would soon be ratified:—and to prove to them that the Government had their welfare at heart, he distributed presents of blankets, clothes and food (from the Agency store) to the Chiefs, and the most destitute of the Indians. This seemed to satisfy them, and they were willing to go to work with harvesting the potatoes, repairing the buildings, and getting ready for the winter. But after they got started they only had three weeks of good weather before heavy rains set in;—which continued until almost Christmas. Then, before the ground was dry enough to work, it started to snow,—and the ground froze, and remained frozen until the first of March.

It was the coldest winter ever experienced since Oregon had been settled by white people. All potatoes, that had not been harvested, froze in the ground: the pack-trains could not get their supplies across the mountains; and the employees at the Agency would have been without food if they had not been allowed to buy small amounts from the Agency Store, which the Government stocked for the use of the Indians only. A careful account was kept of the supplies bought by the employees; and the money they paid was used to replenish the

stock at the store as soon as the roads were passable and new supplies could be brought in.

When Robert went out to the reservation, on the first of October, he planned to send for Maria as soon as the Agent's house had been repaired: but the rains started before the work was finished; and Robert had to stay there all winter, away from his family, with inexperienced help,—and three or four thousand Indians to look after. About the first of December the Blacksmith shop burned down, destroying most of their tools and some of the farming machinery. It looked like an incendiary fire; and the blacksmith was suspected: but no real proof was ever discovered.

As soon as the trails were open, in the Spring, Robert went down to Corvallis,—and over to Salem to see Mr. Rector, to tell him about the difficulties they had to contend with during the winter: but he got no constructive advice from Mr. Rector.

Maria went with Robert when he returned to the Agency: and her quiet efficiency and kindness made her a favorite at once. She cooked good food for Robert; and her very presence soothed his nerves, so that usual irritations went by unnoticed. Maria also showed the Indian women how to sew and make their dresses. She took a bright Indian boy into their house and taught him to cook and keep house like she did; so that Robert could enjoy some of the conveniences of home when she had to return to Corvallis:—for Emma was needing her and she could not stay long at the reservation. During her short stay at the Agency she had helped Robert by making him more comfortable; and she had made friends of the Indians, and their faith in the Government had been stimulated by her unquestioning loyalty and patriotism.

When the Superintendent of Farming, and his wife, went down to Corvallis to get supplies, Maria rode down with them: and then they took Puggie back with them when they returned to Siletz; so that she could visit her father until Maria could go back in June or July.

Puggie was then sixteen; and, as she was living in a country where eligible young men outnumbered young women, of their own class, almost six to one, she had many admirers with matrimonial designs. Among those who saw Puggie most frequently was a handsome young teacher named Orville Porter, who had alluring brown eyes and an engaging manner. He was very intelligent, and was always employed; but he lacked the accumulative instinct,—the ability to spend less than he made;—and, while Robert liked him personally, he did not consider him a suitable husband for his daughter; and was very glad to have her at the Agency where she would not see the charming Orville for awhile.

On May 6th, 1862, Emma's little boy Harold was born. He was a lovely child and Maria adored him, for he was her first grandchild. She delighted in taking all of the care of him, until Emma was up and insisting that it was her duty to wash and dress her own child.

The year 1862 was a very trying one for Maria; for, while she

wanted to be with Emma as much as possible, Robert wrote long letters telling of his loneliness and need of her;—and Eddie and Alice needed her most of all,—especially since their father was away, and they were going to school. Little Alice was a very conscientious student; and, as she had an excellent memory, she usually had perfect lessons:—and came home, each day, with a “head mark” to show that she stood at the head of her class. Maria could not understand how the same child could always be at the head of her class; so she asked Alice how many children there were in her class, and Alice innocently replied: “Just one. I’m the only one”; and was terribly embarrassed when every one laughed. Her teacher later explained that, as Alice always had perfect lessons, she gave her “head marks” as a reward for her good work, and as an incentive to keep studying. Eddie was very bright, but was not interested in being at the head of his class; and needed his father or mother to get him away from his music and make him study. They did not let him take music lessons; for there was no future for a man who devoted his life to music: so they discouraged him for wasting his time with the musical instruments that filled the house. They considered music a delightful accomplishment and recreation: but Eddie would neglect other, and more important, work while he “fiddled away his time” playing (or composing) at the piano, violin or cornet.

Mr. Spencer, Emma’s husband, acted as Commissary and Clerk for Robert, at the Agency; and went up there every three months, with the pack train, to inspect the stock at the Agency’s Store,—and to post and balance the books. As Maria could not go alone over the trail that wound, over mountains and through forests, for fifty miles from Corvallis to the Agency, she went with Mr. Spencer on the first of July; and Puggie returned, with him, to Corvallis to stay with her brother and sister. They still had the Indian woman who did most of the housework: and Puggie, who loved to read, enjoyed staying at home with “the children.” Emma lived nearby, and they had so many cousins in Corvallis, Puggie was never lonely. Each day she walked down town to get the mail and the needed supplies for the house: and if she went at the right time (which she usually did) Orville Porter would walk home with her, and stay, to sit on the front porch, until time for him to return to his work. Then on Sunday afternoons he would stay until time for the evening Church Service and walk, with her, to church. No one thought seriously of their friendship: but, on the morning of August the 26th, he drove up to the house in a buggy; and Puggie went out, carrying a hat-box, to join him. She did not tell any one where she was going: but, before the day was over, the secret had leaked out, and the family learned that they had gone to Albany to be married: and there they remained for a wonderful two day’s honeymoon at the St. Charles Hotel.

Robert and Maria were surprised and hurt when the news reached them. They could hardly believe that their shy, well-behaved, little Puggie would “run away” from home and be married without their

knowledge or consent. Maria, always philosophical, said that "what can't be cured must be endured"; and went home at once to see that her "wayward daughter" had proper clothes for a bride, and linen for the home she must establish:—for no self-respecting mother could let her daughter go empty-handed to a husband. Every girl furnished the linen and bedding for her home when she married, and many girls furnished much more.

Robert continued to have trouble at the reservation; for, although many improvements had been made, and the Indians were in much better condition than they had been when he took over the Agency, he had made an enemy of Mr. Rector, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the State of Oregon; who, with the aid of the incompetent employees Robert had discharged, made trouble for him continually; and sent reports to Washington, urging that he be recalled from service. Robert, in turn, submitted sworn statements, from reliable witnesses, disproving the charges against him; and, in turn accusing the Superintendent of Indian Affairs of serious irregularities and dishonesty in the discharge of his duties.

The trouble was that Robert was a born aristocrat and individualist;—a man of imagination and ability; who could not work successfully with politicians. He wanted to get results; and if the Rules and Regulations of the Indian Department retarded his work;—he simply disregarded the Rules and Regulations. He was sure that he was doing right: and, no doubt, he was if the welfare of the Indians was the important issue:—but that was not the way to hold a political office in 1862.

CHAPTER XXXVII

Maria was glad when his year at the Agency was over, and they could all be together, once more, at their home in Corvallis where the children had to attend school. Robert too was glad to leave the Reservation where he found red tape, political jealousy and graft constantly interfering with the welfare of the Indians and those who were supposed to minister to them. He had also missed taking part in some of the most interesting developments of Western Oregon during the year he had been at Siletz.

It was in October, 1861, that the first telegraph line was finished from the East to Sacramento and San Francisco: and news from other parts of the Union (Civil War news was most important at that time) could reach Central California almost instantly: but it took sixteen days, by stage or horse-back, to travel from Sacramento to Portland:—and Oregonians were also anxious to have quick communication with the rest of the world. A California telegraph line was started in the winter of 1861 to connect Sacramento with Yreka, near the Oregon line: so a number of Oregonians (among whom were Robert and Hamilton Campbell) organized a company to finance a telegraph line from Yreka to Portland and by-stations in the Willamette Valley.

Besides buying stock in the company and stimulating interest in the project, Robert had little to do with the telegraph line that was built, the next year, from Yreka to Portland,—which brought Western Oregon two weeks nearer to the National News Centers.

He was always interested in anything that would benefit the people of his community; but, at that time, the thought of the road he had advocated between Corvallis and Yaquina Bay was foremost in his mind. His experience at the Siletz Indian Agency during the long wet winter of 1861, when the trails were impassable, and supplies could not be carried to the Reservation, had demonstrated the necessity for such a road. As it could not be built by county funds, it would have to be constructed, as a toll road, by private capital: and he was sure there would be enough travel between Corvallis and a tide water village to make such an investment worth while: so, early in the year 1863, B. R. Biddle, Dr. J. R. Bailey and T. B. Odeneal incorporated the first "Toll Road Company" for the purpose of building a wagon road (which would in general follow the old Indian trail) from Corvallis, through the mountain gap, to the coast.

Building a wagon road (with the equipment then available) through the mountains, for that distance, proved to be a greater undertaking than any of them had anticipated: so, in 1865 they enlarged the number of stockholders and changed the name of their corporation to "The Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Road Company, Incorporated."

While Robert was busy with his road project—and other business interests—Maria was usually at home, but never idle. She was an

excellent cook, and always kept the pantry and store-house filled with food,—the “spare room” immaculately clean; and everything ready for the unexpected guests Robert liked to entertain. Eddie, who was sixteen years old, had gone to McMinnville to school; and Alice was attending the Primary Department of the Corvallis College;—a school that had been recently established as a Methodist Institution of Higher Education. Alice grew prettier each year; and her father, who idolized her, could deny her nothing that was in his power to provide. She was such a happy child, and had such pleasant manners, she was like a ray of sunshine in the home that had been desolated by the loss of her two older brothers a few years before.

Members of the family were growing accustomed to living without Henry and young Robert. New interests had come into their home, and once more, the future seemed to hold much that was worth while—: when early in September, 1853, Emma sent for her mother to come to see little Harold, who was feverish, and refused to eat. In that day of large families, Emma and Mr. Spencer had only one child,—and they both adored him. Everything that medical skill and good nursing could do, was done for their child; but a few nights later, when he seemed to be better, he passed away in his sleep.

Emma was overwhelmed by the tragedy. She seemed dazed, and never really recovered from the shock of her child's death. Mr. Spencer almost forgot his own grief in his solicitude for her; and did everything that a loving husband, with wealth at his command, could do to divert her mind from her sorrow, and stimulate her interest in other things. He even tried to persuade Puggie to let them adopt her oldest child, Tracy, to whom Emma was greatly attached. Her sister, Alice, twelve years her junior, spent most of her time with them and did much, with her happy disposition and keen sense of humor, to make their home more normal. Emma and Mr. Spencer were both devoted to Alice, and helped her with her school work and music. They took her to Portland and bought her expensive clothes, and petted her and spoiled her; but Emma could not forget little Harold; and continued to grieve for him when she was alone. She remained a semi-invalid for more than two years, and became bed-ridden early in 1868.

Her cousin William B. Cardwell, a brilliant young physician who had just returned from two years of study and training at the Bellevue Hospital in New York, came to Corvallis and gave all of his time and skill, in an effort to save the life of his favorite cousin: but her will to live was not strong enough to overcome her strange malady.

During the last few weeks of her life, there were times when she spoke to little Harold as though he were waiting, near by, to take her away: and she seemed anxious to go where she could be with her beloved brothers and her little son. There were other times, when she recognized her husband and other members of her family, that she wanted to stay with them;—but she was very tired and wanted to rest,—where there would be no more grief or parting from those she loved. She died in May, 1868, and her devoted husband, who



MATILDA EVANS GARRETT

had loved her, and their little son, so deeply, never recovered from his great loss;—although he lived many more years in a world that held little for him, except memories of the few short years of his marital happiness.

To all who knew her, Emma had been a symbol of the perfect lady. She had been beautiful, talented, clever, friendly and kind: and she had an air of well-bred dignity which gave her a bearing of distinction out of all proportion to her size. It was no wonder that her husband was disconsolate; and that her parents talked of Emma, as long as they lived, as though she had been the most perfect person who had ever lived.

Robert and Maria never became reconciled to the deaths of their first-born children. They had come of a hardy race, and should have had long lives like most of the other members of their family. Maria often wondered if the trip across the plains,—the months of hardship as they plodded wearily through the sand and dust;—the poor food they had sometimes been forced to eat,—and their sufferings from thirst and heat and cold, might not have done something to them that shortened their lives: but if they had stayed in Springfield the boys would have been in the Union Army, and would have been pitted against their own kin in the South. Then they might have died on the battlefield,—or in prison as some of her nephews had done. It was better far, to have been with their families, at home; and to have had a Christian burial on the hill near the Claim.

Maria had been so far away from the conflict between the North and the South, she could never quite understand the bitterness that most of the members of her family felt toward her, because she “had become a Yankee.” She (nor Robert either) could never be Yankees: but *she* could not understand,—or forgive, her family’s disloyalty to the country their ancestors had fought to establish;—and which they had all been taught to love with a loyalty and passion that was almost fanatical. She grieved over their losses of their sons, their homes and their slaves,—and over the poverty that gripped them after the war was over: but they did not want her sympathy,—and she no longer received letters of friendship from her family whom she had always loved so dearly.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

About this time Dr. W. A. Finley, president of the Corvallis College, sent for his wife's cousin, William W. Moreland (who had recently graduated from the Pacific Methodist College of California), to take charge of the Primary Department of the College. During the school's vacation Mr. Moreland went to Salem as a legislative secretary: and, while there, discovered some old documents which referred to an old Federal Grant of 9000 acres of land, in the Territory of Oregon, which had been set aside for the maintenance of an Agricultural and Mechanical College, — provided it be organized and equipped before a certain specified date. Mr. Moreland brought the matter before the Legislature; and as the time limit had almost expired, it was necessary to act at once; or the immense tract of land would revert to the Federal Government and the State of Oregon would lose it forever. The land was all covered with virgin forest, and had never yielded a penny of income that could be used to build or equip a college: so the only possible way for the state to obtain the grant, was to take over some institution of learning that was already functioning, and make it into a college that would meet the necessary requirements. After some investigation, Corvallis College was selected, by the Legislature, to become the State Agricultural College; and Corvallis was made one of the leading educational centers of the North West.

It was about this time that Benjamin Robert Biddle was elected Mayor of Corvallis. He and Maria had always been noted for their "southern hospitality"; and, after he became Mayor of Corvallis he considered it his duty to entertain any, and all, notable persons visiting their community. He enjoyed playing the part of a host, and was proud of his home, his wife and his family. Maria was an ideal hostess. She had a charming personality; her house was tastily furnished and in perfect order; the meals were ample and delicious; and were served in good style; for they had fine linen, china and silver. Eddie and Alice were almost grown, and were too well bred to enter into general conversation when guests were present; but they helped to entertain by furnishing good music, when they were asked. However, although Eddie and Alice said little, they were keen observers,—and perfect mimics: so frequently, after Robert and his guests had gone, they would have great fun putting on a show, in which their former visitors were the leading characters in a very clever farce.

Robert would never have approved of his children ridiculing people who had been their guest; and would have branded their conduct as rude and unbecoming to those who wished to be considered ladies or gentlemen:—but they were very funny, and Maria thought that their "take offs" quite harmless as long as they were confined strictly to their own home.

In the mean time, the toll road to Yaquina Bay was not progressing very rapidly. The work had been much more difficult than the members of the road company had anticipated: so their friend, Senator J. W. Nesmith, introduced a bill in the United States Senate, on January 5th, 1866, granting aid to the State of Oregon for the construction of a military road from Corvallis to Yaquina Bay. The work was to be done by the Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Wagon Road Co., Inc. After the bill was passed the stockholders of the road company were sure that, at last, their dream was about to be realized; and that the village, on Yaquina Bay, had a great future. Dr. Bailey and Samuel Case immediately erected a large hotel near the bay; and Robert built a fine residence, for himself and family; and they planned a patriotic celebration for July 4th, 1866, to honor Independence Day, and to draw the attention of the people of Oregon to the new city they were building on Yaquina Bay.

At five o'clock in the morning, of the momentous day, the steamer Pioneer left her moorings at Pioneer City, with about seventy-five passengers, and proceeded down the bay;—stopping at different points to take on waiting excursionists,—until at last they reached North Beach, where they were loudly cheered by the assembled crowd of about 400 persons. At eleven o'clock the people gathered at the speakers stand, that had been built in a spruce grove near the "Oregon House"; and the exercises were opened by a prayer by Rev. Clark. Then there was singing, which interspersed the speeches by Messrs. Bailey, Biddle, Clark and Dodge. The addresses were said to have teemed with eloquent expressions of loyalty and patriotism: and, as a climax to the interesting program, Mr. Biddle, as a representative of the women of Corvallis, presented a flag, which they had made for the people of Yaquina.

The gift was gratefully and gracefully accepted by a committee, and was raised to the top of the flag-pole that had been made ready to receive it:—and, as the banner floated out on the breeze, the voices of the people rose, in harmony, as they sang "The Star Spangled Banner". Besides the patriotic program there were lunches, games, and races and contests of all kinds, for those who attended the celebration.

While Robert was always actively interested in all public improvements; he was careful not to neglect his drug business, which was his chief source of income at that time. He planned to turn the store over to Eddie, as soon as he could handle it properly; but when he came home from college, at Forest Grove, in 1868, he did not seem to be at all interested in the drug business. He was not temperamentally inclined to cater to the public, as a successful merchant must: so, when Mr. Spencer established himself in San Francisco, in 1870, he sent for Eddie to come down there, where business opportunities were more numerous, and where he might find an opening more to his liking.

Mr. Spencer, who had always tried to take the place of an older brother to the Biddle children, found a good place for Eddie to board,

in a first-class boarding house where he, himself, lived,—supplied him with everything he could possibly need, and gave him spending money besides: so Eddie proceeded to have a good time, and was an immediate social success. He had unusual musical ability, was a good talker,—clever and witty—; was good looking, danced well, and had the manners of a Lord Chesterfield when he wished to please: but Mr. Spencer soon learned that his brother-in-law was not interested in any kind of business. He secured several positions for him; but Eddie was never happy doing the work entailed.

He had always been a great admirer of his cousin James Cardwell; and when he had visited in Portland had always seemed interested in James' work and success as a dentist. He had even helped his cousin by working on sets of false teeth; and had taken great pride in his skill:—so, after a discussion of the subject, Mr. Spencer contacted the dental firm of Huston and Roberts (considered the best in San Francisco) and persuaded them to take his brother-in-law into their office, as an apprentice, where he could study and get the practical experience which would enable him to pass the State Dental Examination.

Alice attended the new Agricultural College; where, by strict attention to her studies, she succeeded in keeping at the head of her class. There were only three to graduate in that first class from the College: but the other two were men and were much older than she. In fact they wore beards and looked like middle-aged men.

Robert and Maria often entertained members of the faculty and their families (Dr. and Mrs. Finley, Mr. and Mrs. Emery and Mr. Moreland) in their home: and Mr. Moreland soon became a frequent and regular visitor. Alice had a friend, Mary Harris, who stayed with the Biddles much of the time, while she attended College; and there were numerous young people going in and out of the house, at all times; and Mr. Moreland, who was only twenty-two, enjoyed being one of them.

He was a quiet young man with a college education, a retentive mind that was a veritable store-house of information, and an unusual amount of natural intelligence. He had been a serious and lonely child; but fortunately, a keen sense of humor had saved him from becoming melancholy and depressed,—as persons of his temperament were apt to be:—and he thoroughly enjoyed being with the young people and taking part in their foolishness and fun. At first it was thought that he was interested in Mary Harris, who was fifteen or sixteen years old: but it was soon apparent that he worshiped at the shrine of lovely little Alice, who, though still a child, teased him and made life miserable for him generally, while she adored him in secret.

The family liked him and he asked them to call him Willie:—which they did in their own home; although it would have been highly improper to have called a college professor by his first name in public:—and the Biddles were always very careful to do everything properly.

Puggie, and her family, moved from Corvallis to Walla Walla, where her husband taught school. She had never been far from her parents and sister before; and she was very lonely, for them, after she moved to Washington; so, a few years later they returned to Oregon. At that time they had three children;—two boys and a girl, whose names were Tracy Darrow, Walter Biddle and Nettie Emma. Robert was partial to Walter who resembled the Biddles,—and Nettie who reminded him of his sister Angeline, who had been called “the Prairie Rose” when she was a girl in Tennessee. Walter was a handsome child and Robert, unconsciously, felt closer to his grandchildren who resembled members of his own family. However, Maria, whose sympathy was always with the one who might feel slighted or neglected, did all sorts of special things for Tracy—such as making ginger-bread-men, cookies or candy—when he came to visit them and stood around the kitchen, watching her cook.

It was late in July, 1869, that a large part of the business section of Corvallis was destroyed by fire. As Robert watched the flames moving relentlessly toward his place of business, he realized that his store was doomed. With his usual foresight and energy, he immediately rented a vacant store in the Masonic Building, opposite the City Hall; and had most of his stock moved before the fire reached it:—so his business continued the next morning, as usual, in his new location.

CHAPTER XXXIX

Alice Biddle was valedictorian of the first class to graduate from the Oregon State Agricultural College in 1870. She was a talented musician, as well as a good student, and her parents were very proud of her. She was considered a highly educated and accomplished young lady; and her engagement to young Professor Moreland was suspected by all who knew her: although Alice herself, hoped to surprise every one when she planned to marry him shortly before the holidays.

As Maria was having trouble with her eyes she was afraid she would not be able to do the fine needle-work that would be necessary for Alice's trousseau: but Aunt Mary Cardwell came to her rescue by inviting her to visit them in Portland where she bought Alice's linen; and then all of the cousins insisted on helping with the sewing. The family had several afternoon sewing-bees, while Alice and her mother were in Portland; and when Maria and Alice returned to Corvallis, most of the sewing was finished for the bride to be. Maria had a chest full of quilts and blankets to give her; and Mr. Spencer sent two beautiful silk dresses, that had been made from her measurements by the best dressmaker in San Francisco: so Alice, herself, had really very little to do to get ready for her wedding,—although she thought she was very busy.

Her cousin, Esther Campbell, who was said to have been the most beautiful girl in Oregon, returned with her, from Portland and made a visit of several weeks. During her visit Ben Holladay, a transportation magnate and one of the most colorful persons of the North West, came to see her; and took the whole family to Salem to the State Fair. At that time Will Moreland was a clerk in the House of Representatives, at Salem; so he joined in the festivities. The Legislature remained in session until the end of October, when Will returned to Corvallis.

Alice and Will were married on the 8th of December, 1870; and Robert gave them a lot in Corvallis, where he hoped they could soon build their own home: but he and Maria were living all alone in their big house, and would be lonely without their "Baby Alice"; so they asked the young people to live with them until they were ready to build. However, when Will passed the Bar Examination, he learned of a better opening in Oregon City; so they went there to live early in 1872.

On November 30th, 1871, their little girl was born, while they were still living with the Biddles. It was fortunate that they were there, where Maria could take care of the child; for Alice was very young and inexperienced; and the baby was seriously ill with whooping cough when she was only a few weeks old: and she would surely have died if her grandmother had not been there to care for her. Alice had always disliked red hair, and would not even play with red-headed children when she was a child; so her horror

and disappointment were great when she first saw her little red baby and realized that it had red hair; but Marie took the baby to her heart and mothered her as only a devoted grandmother can. They named her Esther, for lovely Esther Campbell, and hoped that time would improve her appearance; for it was unbelievable that an unattractive child could be born into a family that was famous for its good looks.

The Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Wagon Road Co. continued to have serious difficulties; for no sooner was one section of the mountain road finished, than a storm would cause a wash-out or landslide; and the work would have to be done all over again. The expense was enormous; and Robert was not the only one of the stockholders who was running short of money. To add to his other difficulties, he had reached the age when men were subject to rheumatism; and he could no longer ride, in the saddle, all day, and sleep out in the open at night, without suffering from fatigue and exposure:—and, if the work on the road was to be done properly and economically, it was necessary for some one to check up on the overseer quite frequently. Robert had done this for several years; but he realized that, in the future, such work would have to be done by a younger man. Maria was anxious for him to sell his interest in the road company. She had never been willing to put any of her own money into the development companies Robert was always helping to organize and finance; for, while she believed in the projects themselves, she had always noticed that the original promoters seldom benefitted financially. They were usually overly optimistic and ran short of funds to complete their undertakings:—or they lacked an administrator with the necessary technical knowledge for the success of the venture. Maria was a very practical, conservative person, who measured the success or failure of any project, by the effect it had on her home. From Maria's point of view, the finest road in the world from Corvallis to tide water, was no compensation for the impoverishment of her husband. Robert had more imagination,—one might call it vision—: and was always urging new developments and improvements in and about the community in which he lived: and was willing, in his enthusiasm, to use everything he had to secure results. Naturally he expected his investments to bring some financial satisfaction: but it was not so much the hope of financial success, as the urge to achieve something worth while, that spurred him on.

From childhood he had helped his entire family. He was always doing for others; but never expected any one to do anything for him,—and felt greatly indebted for any small favor. He also felt a sincere gratitude to the Supreme Being for giving him life; for he thought that life was a great privilege,—and a responsibility. Possibly it was the urge to make his life worth while that spurred him on to undertake projects he was not financially able to complete. In his enthusiasm, he underestimated the difficulties to be encountered; and overestimated his physical and financial strength. With an unusual amount of nervous energy, that seemed to be a

driving power behind his muscles, he had always been able to accomplish as much as two ordinary men in a day's work: but he had reached a time when he could no longer depend on that nervous energy: for he found that he needed rest and sleep and proper food at regular intervals. He developed strange pains between his shoulders and in his stomach; and his hands trembled, so that he could scarcely write or handle delicate tools. Dr. Bailey told him that he would have to slow up if he wanted to live out his natural life.

The other stockholders in the Corvallis and Yaquina Bay Wagon Road Co. were also running short of money and were discouraged: so, when Col. T. E. Hogg, a promoter from San Francisco, offered to buy their land and franchise, they were all glad to sell. The transaction was completed on May 30, 1871: and, at last, Robert was able to relax and adjust himself to a more simple life. He and Maria had considerable property in and near Corvallis. They also had stocks and bonds (many of them worthless) in mining and other development companies of California and Oregon: but it was the Drug Store, and his Real Estate and Insurance Business that brought in regular incomes. He had houses to rent; but often rented them to his friends, from whom he would not collect any rent if he knew they were needing money for other necessities. In fact he sometimes refused to accept their rent money even when they insisted on paying:—and, if they sent him a few glasses of jelly, or a pumpkin pie, Robert would feel that he was under such great obligation to them, he would not charge them any rent at all. He had been brought up with those ideas of neighborliness, hospitality and generosity (common in the old South) that made it almost impossible for him to accept money from any one for food or shelter. Even in the store, if Robert were there, he would seldom accept money from any of his relatives or close friends, for anything they purchased.

In 1872 Eddie finished his two years apprenticeship with Dr. Roberts, in San Francisco; and returned to Corvallis a full-fledged dentist. Dr. Roberts had been very proud of him and had offered to make him a partner in his office; but Eddie wanted to have his own office, in Corvallis, in the building next to his father's store. At first he was very glad to be back where everybody knew him; and he did well, professionally, from the start: but during the long wet winter he found himself frequently homesick for sunny California.

Will Moreland, with Alice and little Esther, were occasional visitors from Oregon City, where Will was doing quite well with his law practice,—which was necessarily small to begin with: but in 1873 he was elected Superintendent of Schools for Clackamas County,—which increased his income materially;—so he and Alice were very happy in their little home on the bluff,—high above the town and river. But Will had lived in California ten years and could not accustom himself to the cold, damp winters of Oregon.

In the Fall of 1873 he had a severe cold,—and continued to cough until the warm days of late Spring,—when at last the sunshine made the atmosphere warm again, and people could enjoy the out-of-doors in comfort.

Dr. and Mrs. Finley had returned to California, where he had been appointed President of the Pacific Methodist College at Santa Rosa: and they kept writing about the beautiful weather, and urged Will to come to Sonoma County, where there was a good opening for a young lawyer.

When, in the Fall of 1874, Will developed another cough; he decided to go to California, for a few months, to see if he could better his condition. Robert and Maria dreaded having Alice go so far away; and insisted that she and little Esther stay with them until Will had tried the winter in California; and could decide, definitely, if it would be best for them to make the change.

Just before Will was ready to start, Eddie (who had always had a secret desire to return to California) decided that he would go too: and the two young men opened offices in Healdsburg, sixteen miles north of Santa Rosa, in Sonoma County, in the Fall of 1874. Eddie married a lovely San Francisco girl in June of 1875: and Will was preparing to return for his wife and daughter in September or October;—when Robert met with a serious financial disaster. The Corvallis business district was swept by another disastrous fire; and again the Drug Store was burned: but this time nothing could be saved:—and the loss was complete, except for the insurance collected.

Maria, who was inclined to worry any way,—and who had been very unhappy when she thought of losing her two youngest children, was greatly discouraged: but Robert, true to his philosophy of finding a remedy for every evil under the sun, adjusted himself to the inevitable, and went home smiling, the next day, and said: “Perhaps that fire was a blessing in disguise. The more I think of it, the more it seems like the hand of Providence is shaping our affairs, so that we too can go to California. Do you think we could get ready before Thanksgiving?” Maria put down her sewing and looked at her husband in astonishment, as she said: “My land, Pa, what are you talking about? You surely don’t think we could just pick up, and leave everything here, and go to California to live! I don’t see how we could do that.” Robert replied: “Well, I’ve been thinking about it for several days,—in fact ever since the fire; and I’ve decided that we can. I think that I’m too old to start all over again with a new store: and right now we can sell all of our property at a fair price. People are coming to Corvallis to educate their children; and they want to buy homes. Our children are all grown; and there’s no reason for us to stay here if they’re not going to be here any more. There’s much less rain in California than we have here; and a drier climate might be better for my rheumatism. Eddie says that Healdsburg is in a fertile valley, between the hills—just the kind of place you always liked—; and that the town is

growing rapidly. The newspaper he sent me, told about the new houses that are being built there now: and I have an idea that it would be a good place for us to live:—and then we could be near Eddie and Alice and little Esther.”

Alice, who had come into the room in time to hear most of the conversation, said: “Oh Pa, I’d be so glad if you and Ma would go to California! I wouldn’t mind going at all if you were going too. I want to go to be with Will; but it would be terrible to be so far away I couldn’t see you any more. Oh, I do hope you’ll go!” Then Maria said: “We must remember that we’re leaving Puggie and her family here;—even though we seldom see them any more. Puggie wrote, some time ago, that they were thinking of making a change, so her husband might decide to go to California too. I am sure that I would like to go there for awhile; and,—if we found that we didn’t like it we could come back to Corvallis.” Robert replied: “I have already arranged to sell most of our property here; and Will says that we can get a higher rate of interest in California than we can here: so I think we ought to try it for awhile any way. We should go with the expectation of staying; but with the intention of returning, for a visit, before long;—or we can come back to stay if we are disappointed in California.”: so, when he arranged to sell their home, with most of their furniture, it was with the understanding that they could buy it back, for the purchase price, if they returned to Corvallis within five years.

Before they left Corvallis, Maria took some of her hardier plants, and a basket full of bulbs, out to the cemetery; and planted them on the lot where their boys and Emma and little Harold were buried. Mr. Spencer had already arranged to have the plot cared for, after they were gone; so she knew that they would not be neglected. As she stood by their graves, on the hill, and looked over toward the old log house on their claim, where they had all been so happy together, she seemed to feel the presence of her children about her: and knew that it was only their poor bodies that had been destroyed by disease,—and lay buried in those flower-covered graves: and that Henry, young Robert and Emma were not being left behind;—but would be with her always, no matter where she lived.

Early in November these pioneers of Tennessee and Illinois and Oregon, at the ages of sixty-one and sixty-seven,—a son and daughter of several generations of American pioneers, started out to found a new home in a new community,—and they felt young and full of enthusiasm, and were not afraid.

EPILOGUE OR CONCLUSION

The material for the preceeding chapters was collected from the stories, my grandparents used to tell, of the places they had lived, the incidents of their family lives and the customs of their times: from old records and traditions: from letters yellow and brittle with age; from old newspaper files, State archives and libraries in Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Oregon and California: from old grave-stones and from County records from every county in which Maria and Robert Biddle, or their American ancestors, had lived. There are few records of their life in California except in the memories of a very few old people; and so, in conclusion, I will try to picture the last years of my grandparents' (Robert and Maria Biddle) lives, as I remember them.

My Grandmother, my mother, and I, came to San Francisco, from Oregon, on a boat, in November or December of 1875. I have no recollection of seeing my grandfather on the boat; and think he must have driven down from Oregon with his team and spring wagon. No doubt Col. Hogg had been delegated to look after us; for I can remember him stopping at our state-room door, to see if there was anything we needed. Mother and Grandmother must have been sea-sick; for my only memory of them is, of their lying horizontally in their births, while I ran about the deck under the supervision of the fat, jolly Colonel, who laughed uproariously whenever the boat gave a sudden lurch and caused me to lose my balance and fall, or slide sprawlingly across the deck.

When we reached San Francisco we went to the Palace Hotel, where we remained several days. The most vivid recollection I have of the hotel is of the colored servants, and the rotunda, in the center of the building, where carriages came in from the street to leave well-dressed men and women at the hotel, or to drive around the small circle several stories below our rooms. There was a wide promenade circling this rotunda, on each floor, where adults could look down and see what was happening below: but a high and ornate balustrade made it impossible for children to see anything at all below: so, when no one was looking, I found a place, between the banisters, wide enough for my head to go through. Then, when my head was through, my neck slipped lower down where I could rest comfortably and get a good view of the scene below: but my happiness was short-lived; for when I tried to pull my head back, the space was too small, and I found myself caught in a trap. Then I no longer wanted to see what was going on below. The only thing that mattered was for me to get my head back where it belonged. I was becoming panic-stricken when grandmother found me,—and then I knew that everything would be all right. As she could not release me herself she called one of the colored

servants, who had evidently handled accidents, of that kind, before; for he simply raised me up so that my head came back through a larger opening (that I had put it through in the first place). Then he laughed at me and I felt very much humiliated as I watched him walk away.

When we reached Healdsburg we were established in a house Grandfather had bought for our temporary use. I am sure that it was a very poorly built house; for it had no railing around the second story opening for the steep stairs that went up from a dark, closet like hall on the first floor. My father and mother and I slept upstairs; and I was warned, almost daily, about those dangerous stairs. My mother often said to me: "You must be careful about those stairs; for, if you should ever fall down, you would break your neck and be dead when you reached the bottom."

As my mother was a very truthful woman I believed every word she said; and tried, my best, to be careful in going up and down those stairs; but one day I stumbled, at the top, and fell and rolled, and bumped from step to step the whole way to the floor of the dark hall below. On my way down I thought that my neck would be broken and I would be dead when I reached the bottom: and, when I found myself still alive after my terrible experience, I was so happy I did not think of crying,—or even realize that I was hurt. Grandmother, who had heard the noise came running to me; and I cried: "Don't be frightened Grandma, for I'm not dead at all, and my neck isn't broken either."

I remember that Uncle Willie Spencer came from San Francisco to visit us, while we lived in that house. He always brought handsome presents for my mother and me; and played with me and teased me and made me think he was one of the most wonderful men in the world. There was just one thing wrong about him (which did not bother me at all, as it interested me greatly), and that was that he smoked cigars: and, although he never smoked in-doors, the house was thoroughly aired, after each visit, to get rid of the horrible odor of tobacco.

One day I heard some one say that he had married again; and the next time he came he seemed different. He brought my mother and me, each, a gold locket and chain. Mine was simple and appropriate for a child of my age; but my mother's was very elaborate and handsome. He also brought three oil paintings, in gold frames;—of Aunt Emma, their little boy Harold and himself. He was very nice to all of us, but he did not play with me as usual: and, when he had gone, I heard the grown-ups say that his breath smelled of liquor,—and that some one had said that he had "started to drink". I think he died a short time later; for I never saw him again.

I have an old business card that shows that my grandfather was in the Real Estate and Insurance Business, at this time; and had a desk in my father's law office. He was also elected, a short time later, as Justice of the Peace: but his business did not seem to keep him away from home many hours of the day; for my recollection of him

is that he was always busy improving the place where we lived. However it was not long before he sold that place and bought a much better one:—a large brick house with two fire-places, and a pump in the kitchen by the wooden sink. That pump, in the kitchen, was a real luxury; for wells were usually outside the house, and water had to be drawn in buckets, and then emptied into containers for household use. The house was on a corner lot 200 feet square, with a large barn on the back by the alley. In one side of the barn, next to the carriage-shed, Grandfather had his shop, with a work bench and all kinds of carpenter tools. He also had a small forge where he could mend (and sometimes make) his garden tools. It seemed that he could do everything; and I spent hours each day watching him work and marveling at the miracles he performed.

Grandfather made cabinets, cupboards, wardrobes and other furniture for the house; and kept everything about the place in perfect repair:—while Grandmother worked in her garden and had the finest flowers in the town. She studied Vick's Catalogue to find the best and newest varieties of flowers; and had the knack (or intelligence) to make everything grow. She had boxes of sand, loam and fine manure, from which she mixed soil suited for each plant:—and I followed her around, while she worked, and learned the mysteries of growing plants. Grandmother gave me a flower-bed of my own; and I soon had—crowded into that small space—plants of nearly every variety that grew in our large garden. I watched her bud and graft new varieties into the hardy wood of her shrubs and trees; and start new plants from seeds and cuttings in her boxes of sand and loam:—and then I tried to do everything I had seen her do so successfully,—and my luck was almost as good as hers. I remember one rose bush, in my garden, on which I had four or five kinds of roses blooming at the same time.

When the weather was bad; or, if for some reason I could not work in the garden with Grandmother, I would go out to the shop to Grandfather and he would teach me to use his tools. While he worked on some piece of furniture for his home, he would give me pieces of wood and show me how to make something for my play-house. He always drew a design of the article he intended to make, and used the drawing to work from: so I tried to do the same; and Grandfather was astonished to find that I could really draw a picture of the thing I had in mind. He at once started to develop the artistic ability he thought he had discovered; and he and I would sit on the porch and draw pictures of the things we saw about us. We started drawing pictures of the barn, for it was easy to do. Then we tried the house across the street,—a near-by church, etc., etc. Grandfather was not an artist; but he was one of those persons who seemed able to do anything he attempted; and, because he thought I had some talent he planned "sketching trips" with me whenever he had time; and we would have contests to see who could make the best picture. He was a natural teacher; and we not only enjoyed the games we played,—which was his way of teach-

ing—; but they were the foundation for the art work I did later in life.

Grandfather must have been a poet at heart for he loved Nature in all of her phases. I never heard of his making attempt at writing poetry; but he often told short stories in rhyme, for my amusement: and I thought they were so wonderful, I went about the house making rhymes about everything I heard,—much to the disgust of the whole family; for, while my lines always rhymed they usually failed to make sense.

Grandfather loved the woods and the mountains: and there was nothing I liked better than to go “prospecting” with him,—far from town, where we saw so many new and unusual things. He knew the names of all the trees and flowers,—the wild animals and birds, we saw on those excursions: and he called my attention to all the lovely colors that God used to make the World so beautiful. Even the snakes we found, near the streams, were spotted and striped in gorgeous designs! Sometimes we would go far from the road, and he would tell me how to keep my sense of direction,—and how to find my way by the sun and stars,—by the growth of certain plants and trees, by the shadows and the running water,—and by the general contour of the country.

One time, when we were “prospecting”, we found an old abandoned tunnel to a mine; which Grandfather, at once, started to explore. We went in a few feet together; but it was very dark inside and I was afraid that it might be the home of rattle-snakes or skunks,—or bears or mountain-lions; and I begged him not to go in so far: but he kept on going into that dark and dangerous (?) tunnel; and I cried; “Oh please come back Grandpa You might fall down a shaft, or something. Grandma always said that you were too venturesome, and now I know she was right. Oh please don’t go any further!” He only stayed in there a few minutes, and when he came out we went home together; but, no doubt, he took a lantern out there the next day and examined the place at his leisure. He thought that my concern about him, that day, was very funny:—especially my remark about Grandmother saying that he was too venturesome: and, after that, “Grandma says you’re too venturesome” became a common expression in the Biddle and Moreland families. Grandmother was very conservative, and never took unnecessary chances; but that saying truthfully applied to my mother and to me as well as to my grandfather.

Another time we went, in a spring wagon, on an old mountain road along Mill Creek. It was undoubtedly an old wood road that was seldom used; for, when we came to a ford across the creek, there was a water-hole about three feet deep on the right hand side: and it seemed to me that it would be impossible to cross without tipping the wagon over on that side; so I begged: “Oh Grandpa, please don’t try to cross there! We’ll tip over sure, and we’ll drown in that hole! Grandpa please, *please* don’t try to cross!”: But Grandfather kept driving straight ahead; and I held on to him

as we moved to the left side of the seat while the right-hand wheels went down into the hole,—and water came up into the wagon bed:—but we got over to the other side of the creek without accident. Then Grandfather stopped and said: “Now child, you must never get frightened, when you’re with me; for I won’t let anything happen to you. Didn’t you see those tracks on the other side of the creek? They show that some one else has crossed there since the rains, and we can always do whatever any one else has done. Try always to remember that you can do *anything* that any one else has ever done,—if you only try hard enough; but if you are *afraid* to try, you will never do anything worth while. It is only *fear of failure* that blocks the road to success. So child, you must never be afraid to try to do anything that any one else has ever done before:—and sometime you may even be able to do something that no one has ever succeeded in doing before.”

Grandfather was a natural teacher, and his ideas were like seeds that fell on the fertile soil of my inquiring mind. He never tired of answering questions; and made his code of ethics, and social ideals, living things, by his own behavior and example. He was a delightful companion and was always interesting,—even when he talked about character building. He stressed the difference between Character and Reputation;—and said that Character was what a person really was, while Reputation was what other people thought he was:—that Truth was the foundation for Character:—that people were untruthful because they were *afraid* of something:—so the untruthful person was a coward and a cheat, and could never be trusted.

I remember his saying: “A fine Character is more to be desired than learning or riches; for, without character, you can never have any self-respect. It would be terrible to have to live with some one you could not respect; for you could never be happy with such a person: and remember child, *you have to live with yourself always*. If you want to grow up to be a lady, and be a credit to your parents and grandparents, and your great-grandparents, you must always be honest and truthful and kind. There are many other things you will have to learn, but these are the most important.” He somehow made me feel that not only he and Grandmother,—and my mother and father;—but all of our ancestors who came before them, were watching me and expecting me to live up to the best that was in me.

Every summer we went to the mountains for a camping trip:—when the men of the family hunted and fished for a few weeks: and we all slept on the ground, and cooked over an open fire. Before returning to our homes we spent some time at the coast, where we caught fish, from the rocks with a hook and line, or with a dip-net in the surf; and made big fires of drift wood on the beaches. As I look back, those days and nights, on the coast, were the most exciting of the whole trip.

Ten of us rode in a large tally-ho drawn by four horses; while our provisions and camping equipment were carried in freight

wagons. When we passed, or met, other people on the road, as we moved from place to place, the driver would cry "Whoa!" and set the brakes; so that the horses could rest while the men "passed the time o'day". In that way, we became acquainted with the neighboring settlers, and learned about the condition of the roads,—where the different kinds of game were most plentiful; and where the best camp-sites (near trout streams and good drinking water) could be found.

Game was abundant in those days; and trout were so plentiful I often caught them myself, with a bent pin for a hook, or with a home-made net. It is needless to say that it was grandfather who showed me how to make a bent-pin-hook, and how to tie a net.

A day in camp was a delight to a child with grandparents like mine. I would get up, in the morning, as soon as I heard Grandfather making the morning fires; and would be ready to go with him when he started, with his buckets, to get cooking and drinking water from the spring. As we walked up the creek bank, toward the spring, we would stop at the places we had left food for the squirrels, and examine the sand for tracks of animals that had passed that way during the night. Grandfather could tell, by those tracks, just what animals had been there for food: and he taught me to distinguish them by, what he called, their "calling-cards they had left on the sand to let us know they had been to see us". Then, after a breakfast of wild game, fried potatoes, hot light-rolls with butter and wild blackberry jam,—and coffee, we would go out and look for fire-wood. It was my duty to gather twigs of dry brush that could be used for kindling;—and also to be on the look-out for pieces of tan-bark that would make good coals to use under (and over) the Dutch-ovens, when Grandmother baked bread and cakes and pies.

By the time we had gathered our supply of wood, Grandmother would be starting out with her buckets to pick berries: and, if I hurried, I could go with her. There were blackberries, strawberries, black-raspberries and thimbleberries, growing wild, near the creeks and on the mountain sides, that were delicious for pies and jam. Blackberries were so plentiful the women, of the party, canned quantities to take home. Huckleberries grew all around the camp and covered the hill-sides: and, when they began to ripen, Grandmother kept the Dutch ovens hot, trying to bake enough huckleberry-pies to satisfy "our family".

My grandparents seemed to know all about everything that grew, or lived, in the mountains. We fed the birds and small animals; we gathered nutmegs from the tree near our tent: we dug soap-root that lathered when we washed our hands in the brook: we found wild lettuce and many varieties of greens, to cook with bacon for our meals:—in fact, they seemed to know how to live off the wild things that they found near our camp.

After supper we would sit around the camp-fire; and the grown-ups would talk about the things they had seen and done during

the day; or, sometimes, Grandfather would tell us stories of the early days when he lived in Virginia and Tennessee. He had lived in the pioneer days of South-western Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, California and Oregon; so he had an endless variety of stories, of real adventures, to tell us.

Sometimes long-haired, buckskin clad men would come to our camp fire, and entertain us with the stories of their exciting experiences in the South-west. One of these men, who stands out in my memory, was Texas Tom,—who had dark eyes and wavy brown hair that hung around his shoulders. He was handsome and romantic,—to a child of eight; and I would sit in motionless adoration while he played his banjo and sang Southern songs,—and told impossible stories of himself and his experiences. He, and his friends, had a cabin within a mile of our camp; and he visited us frequently,—bringing us choice cuts of venison,—and guiding the men to his favorite hunting grounds.

We found bear tracks near our camp several times; and, one night, we heard a mountain-lion near by. That night we kept the fire burning, and some one on watch, all night. Early the next morning the men went out to hunt the dangerous “cat”:—while I had to stay in camp, with the women, until all danger was past.

I remember my mother’s twenty-sixth birthday, when I marveled at her great age. I wondered if I could ever grow to be as old as that; but I never thought of Grandfather as being old. He was always so active,—both mentally and physically! He walked so straight and so fast, and he understood my problems so thoroughly. To me he seemed fundamentally ageless: but one time, I remember, he went to San Francisco; and I heard some one say that he had gone to see a doctor. Then his feet began to bother him and he had to wear large felt shoes;—and one day I went to his house and he was in bed; but he talked to me and I did not think of his being sick.

One day he told my father to bring a paper and pencil to his bedside, as he wanted to tell him something about his family; so that his children would know who they really were after he was gone. He intimated that his people were political refugees who came to America in early Colonial times; but he never told him anything definite; for my mother, who adored him, begged him not to think of preparing for death,—for she was sure he would soon be well again. She told him that he must think of something else; and when he got well he could write his family history himself.

He said: “You must not feel that way Daughter. My life has been very full. It has been a great and glorious adventure. No man ever had a better wife and children—or a happier home—than I have had: but the Lord has said ‘the days of our years are three score and ten’: and he has already given me four more years than the allotted time. I am satisfied. I could not ask for more. I am truly grateful for all that he has given me.”

* * *

I was sent away to boarding school, about that time, and do not remember seeing my grandfather again. He died on September 18th, 1882; and was buried in the lot he had selected, on the side of the hill, in the Healdsburg Cemetery.

We were living at Sacramento at that time, and I saw little of my grandmother until we returned to Healdsburg in 1885, when Grandmother came to live at our home. She also had a room at "Uncle Eddie's" and spent part of her time with his family.

As my mother had been the youngest in her family, and had married at sixteen, my grandmother had taken it upon herself to care for me when I was a baby; and had continued to look after me until I was old enough to go away to boarding school: so she always seemed, to me, like my mother; and my own mother was more like a glamorous older sister,—who petted me at times,—but scolded and found fault with my childish imperfections: and was secretly humiliated to be the mother of a child who lacked the good looks of the other members of her family.

Grandmother, on the other hand, liked to have me with her and never seemed conscious of my physical imperfections. She always seemed to understand me, and responded to my inquiring interest in the world about me, by answering my questions and teaching me the things she knew. From her I learned, very early, the art of growing plants. It was through the stories she told me of her family, and the pioneer life they lived, that I developed an interest in American History; and it was due to her encouragement that I learned to sew and make my own clothes. My mother taught me, when I was quite small, to use a needle and thread and to make neat stitches: but Grandmother gave me the materials to sew with, if I would make my own clothes; and it was such a delight for me to be able to select the styles and fabrics, for my dresses; I worked diligently and turned out good looking clothes.—At least Grandmother and I thought that I did,—which was enough to make me happy.

Grandmother was a great reader, and would sit for hours, wearing her glasses and also using a large magnifying (reading) glass, while she tried to read the newspapers and latest books. My mother and I often read aloud to her about political and international affairs;—in which she was particularly interested. She had lived through so much of our national history, she was one of the best informed persons, on that subject, I ever knew: but she never expressed an opinion about anything, when company was present; for, in her day, a *lady* was not supposed to be intellectual,—and *she* was always a *lady*.

She always sat, in her chair, at the right hand side of the fireplace, and listened to others or talked "small talk" when she was included in the conversation;—and conversation, in our home, usually included every one present. She had a keen sense of humor, and was not only quick to see a joke, but always had a clever reply at her tongue's end. She never interfered with the affairs of others; and I have never known any one else who was always so uniformly cheerful and agreeable at all times. Every one loved "Grandma",

and callers would have been disappointed if she had not been in the room, and been included in the conversation, when they were there.

She had several houses, which she rented; and she collected her rents and attended to all of her business affairs herself. When she had to go some place, she would put on her black hat (to shade her eyes), over her lace cap and tie it tightly, with the ribbons, under her chin: then she would start down the street, walking so fast we would have to quicken our usual gait in order to keep up with her. She often wanted to go out to sermons or lectures in the evening; and she had a little brass lantern she always carried on such occasions. I usually went with her; but she always insisted on carrying the lantern herself.

When she was eighty-two (or three) years old, one of her tenants cheated her: and she felt so badly about it she decided to sell her property so that she would not have to deal with dishonest people any more.

When I grew old enough to have young men callers, Grandmother seldom made any comments about them: but we soon knew that she had a favorite, and it was her favorite I married.

Aunt Puggie had several children and one or two grandchildren:—and Uncle Eddie had two children (Edna and Chester Biddle); but Grandmother had had me with her so many years, I am sure that I was her favorite grandchild: and, when my children came, they seemed to her to be the most wonderful of them all. If Chester Biddle had married and had children, with the Biddle name, they would (no doubt) have been her favorites.

During the 1893 panic, and the financial depression that followed it was a struggle, for almost every one, to live and pay for the necessities of life: but each time I saw my grandmother she would take my hand in hers, and press a ten dollar gold coin into my palm,—in a way that no one else would know of the gift I had received: and it was those ten dollar gold pieces that clothed me, and my little girl, during that time of stress.

One day in September, 1899, I received a letter from my mother, saying that Grandmother had had a fall; and, although she did not seem to be seriously hurt, she was confined to her bed. As I had never before known her to stay in bed a day, I feared that her condition might be grave; and I went immediately to Healdsburg to help care for her.

Her fall must have been caused by a "stroke"; for, although she did not appear to suffer, she had lost her eyesight entirely and her hearing was very bad. Her memory was also poor, and, much of the time, she did not recognize her friends,—or members of the family: so, when I arrived, my mother said: "Grandma may not know you, for her mind seems to be confused.": But when I went to her bed-side, I took her hand in mine and said: "I have come to see you Grandma. Do you know me?". She answered immediately: "Of course I know you Esther! What ever made you think I wouldn't

know you? Remember how we used to work in the garden together? I think about you so often. How are the children?"

I stayed with Grandmother until the end; and, although she lost her hearing, as well as her sight, a few days later,—she always seemed to know when I was in the room. As I sat by her bed, she would put out her hand for me to hold, and she would say: "I'll never forget how you used to toddle around after me and ask questions. I always answered them, and then you would think about what I told you;—and that was the way you learned to live right."

One day she said: "Everything is so dark! I seem to lose my way, and I don't want to go away from home and those I love."; and I said: "But Grandma, you have Grandpa, and Robert and Henry and Aunt Emma waiting for you;—so you will not be alone."; and she answered: "Yes, I know, but it has been so long since they went away;—and I want to stay here with you and Alice and Eddie and the children." Her periods of consciousness became shorter, with longer intervals of sleep between. In one last interval of semi-consciousness, she opened her sightless eyes and said: "Oh, the Light! The Glory!"—and that was all.

A friend of Grandmother's was sitting by me, in the room, at her bed-side; and the friend said: "Grandma will soon have solved the mystery of life and death."; and I replied: "Yes, if there is consciousness after death.": to which the friend answered: "If there is no life of consciousness after death, then this life is a teetotal failure."; and then I said: "If Grandma could only tell us,—she would.".

Grandmother never wakened again,—and in another hour she was gone.

We tried to carry out her wishes, and her body was prepared for burial by those who loved her;—and then the undertaker placed it on a bier, in the cool living-room. I was the last person, in the house, to go to bed; and, as I changed the clothes, the undertaker had laid across her face, I marveled at the change Death had made in her features. Most of the lines of age were gone,—there was a smile on her lips; and I could see what a lovely young woman she must have been.

I was thinking of her, and of how much she had always meant to me, as I went up stairs to my room, and struck a match to light my lamp. Then, as I glanced toward the open window, I saw a halo of light that filled the dark space; and, in the center, was the smiling face of my grandmother, young and beautiful and happy. The apparition was only there a second, and then faded away. I blew out the light, thinking that I might see her more plainly in the dark. I kept watching while I undressed and prepared for bed: and then I lay in my bed, hour after hour, in the dark, watching and waiting for the vision to return, until at last, I dropped off into a deep, dreamless sleep.

I have often wondered if it could have been a trick of my imagination. I had had very little sleep for several nights, my eyes were

tired and my nerves were on edge:—and when I turned my eyes from the lighted lamp to the dark space of the open window, I might easily have had the impression of seeing a halo of light:—and,—just for a second, I might have imagined that my Grandmother's face was the center from which that light radiated. Or, could Grandmother have wanted so much to demonstrate (for me) that there was conscious immortality after death, that it was possible for her to make herself visible, for only an instant, to one she loved and wanted to comfort?

Whatever life Robert and Maria Biddle may have found beyond the grave, we can not know: but we do know that the lives they lived here, the ideals they cherished, and the precepts they taught, have been handed on to the world through all of those with whom they came in contact: but especially through their children,—and their children's children to the fifth generation:—and they are a living force in the world today. Such people made America; and such is our heritage.

ROBERT BEEDLE was in York County, Virginia, in 1647.
When he died in Isle of Wight County, Virginia, in
1679, his name was spelled BITTLE for five generations.

BENJAMIN BITTLE (later changed to BIDDLE) was born
about 1776 in Southampton County, Virginia. He
married Mary (Polly) Capell in 1799. Their children
were:

CHARLES BIDDLE

MARTHA BIDDLE

BENJAMIN ROBERT BIDDLE, born in Southampton County
in 1808

MARY ANN CARDWELL (*Aunt Mary*)

JACK BIDDLE

HARRIETT CAMPBELL

ANGELINE ATKINSON

